LOLA MONTEZ

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE

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Lola Montez

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LOLA MONTEZ

AN ADVENTURESS OF THE 'FORTIES

BY

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE

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PREFACE

The story of a brave and beautiful woman, whose fame filled Europe and America within the memory of our parents, seems to be worth telling. The human note in history is never more thrilling than when it is struck in the key of love. In what were perhaps more virile ages, the great ones of the earth frankly acknowledged the irresistible power of passion and the supreme desirability of beauty. Their followers thought none the less of them for being sons of Adam. Lola Montez was the last of that long and illustrious line of women, reaching back beyond Cleopatra and Aspasia, before whom kings bent in homage, and by whose personality they openly confess themselves to be swayed. Since her time man has thrown off the spell of woman's beauty, and seems to dread still more the competition of her intellect.

Lola Montez, some think, came a century

too late; "in the eighteenth century," said Claudin, "she would have played a great part." The part she played was, at all events, stirring and strange enough. The most spiritually and æsthetically minded sovereign in Europe worshipped her as a goddess; geniuses of coarser fibre, such as Dumas, sought her society. She associated with the most highly gifted men of her time. Equipped only with the education of a pre-Victorian schoolgirl, she overthrew the ablest plotters and intriguers in Europe, foiled the policy of Metternich, and hoisted the standard of freedom in the very stronghold of Ultramontane and reactionary Germany.

Driven forth by a revolution, she wandered over the whole world, astonishing Society by her masculine courage, her adaptability to all circumstances and surroundings. She who had thwarted old Europe's skilled diplomatists, knew how to horsewhip and to cow the bullies of young Australia's mining camps. An indifferent actress, her beauty and sheer force of character drew thousands to gaze at her in every land she trod. So she flashed like a meteor from continent to continent, heard of now at St Petersburg, now at New York, now at San Francisco, now at Sydney. She crammed

enough experience into a career of forty-two years to have surfeited a centenarian. She had her moments of supreme exaltation, of exquisite felicity. Her vicissitudes were glorious and sordid. She was presented by a king to his whole court as his best friend ; she was dragged to a London police-station on a charge of felony. But in prosperity she never lost her head, and in adversity she never lost her courage.

A splendid animal, always doing what she wished to do ; a natural pagan in her delight in life and love and danger—she cherished all her life an unaccountable fondness for the most conventional puritanical forms of Christianity, dying at last in the bosom of the Protestant Church, with sentiments of self-abasement and contrition that would have done credit to a Magdalen or Pelagia.

In my sympathy with this fascinating woman, it is possible that I have exaggerated the importance of her *rôle* ; probable, also, that I have digressed too freely into reflections on her motives and on the forces with which she had to contend. Those who prefer a bare recital of the facts of her career, I refer at once to the admirable epitome to be found in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Here I

have not hesitated to include all that seemed to me to throw light on the subject of my sketch, on the people around her, and on the influences that shaped her destiny.

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE.

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I

CHILDHOOD

LOLA MONTEZ

AN ADVENTURESS OF THE 'FORTIES

I

CHILDHOOD

THE year 1818 was, on the whole, a good starting-point in life for people with a taste and capacity for adventure. This was not suspected by those already born. They looked forward, after the tempest that had so lately ravaged Europe, to a golden age of slippered ease and general stagnation. The volcanoes, they hoped, were all spent. "We have slumbered seven years, let us forget this ugly dream," complacently observed a German prince on resuming possession of his dominions; and "the old, blind, mad, despised, and dying king's" worthy regent expressed the same confidence when he gave the motto, "A sign of better

times," to an order founded in this particular year. Yet the child that thus with royal encouragement began life in England at that time learned before he could toddle to tremble at the mysterious name of "Boney," and later on would thrill with fear, delight, and horror at his nurse's recital of the atrocities and final glorious undoing of that terrific ogre. Presently he would meet in his walks abroad, red-coated, bewhiskered veterans who had met the monster face to face (or said they had); who would recount stories of decapitated kings, dreadful uprisings, and threatened invasions; who had lost a leg or an arm or an eye at Waterloo or Salamanca; which victories (they assured him) were mainly due to their individual valour and generalship. As the child grew older he would begin to make a coherent story out of these strange happenings: he would realise through what a period of storm and stress the world had passed immediately before his advent. He would listen eagerly at his father's table to more trustworthy relations of the great battles by men whose share in them his country was proud to acknowledge. Waterloo, Trafalgar, the Nile, would be fought over again in the school playground. For the best part of his life he might

expect to have as contemporaries, men who had seen Napoleon with their own eyes, and shaken Nelson by his one hand—men who had seen thrones that seemed as stable as the everlasting hills come crashing down, to be pieced together with a cement of blood and gunpowder. How often the boy, or, as in this particular case, the girl, must have longed for a recurrence of those brave days, and deprecated the peaceful present. But for him (or her) far more amazing things were in store. His it was to see society emerge from its worn-out feudal chrysalis, and to take the path which may yet lead to civilisation. Those born in 1818 could have the delightful distinction of being carried in the first railway train, of sending the first "wire," of boarding the first "penny 'bus." Born in the age of the coach and the hoy, they would die in the era of the locomotive and mail steamer. Theirs was an age of transition indeed, most curious to watch, most thrilling to traverse. And—most valuable privilege of all to those that loved to play a part in great affairs—they would be in good time to assist at the widest spread and most terrific upheaval Europe had known since the downfall of the Roman Empire. To have been thirty years of age in that year of years, 1848! Those

who witnessed the great drama must have felt that to have come into the world more than three decades before would have been a mistake the most grievous.

Among the children fortunate enough, then, to be born when the nineteenth century was in its eighteenth year was the heroine of our history. Limerick, the city of the broken treaty, was her birthplace, Maria Dolores Eliza Rosanna the names bestowed upon her in baptism. Only a year before (on 3rd July 1817) her father, Edward Gilbert, had been gazetted an ensign in the old 25th regiment of the line, now the King's Own Scottish Borderers. He may have been, as his daughter and only child afterwards claimed, the scion of a knightly house, but he could boast a far more honourable distinction—that he rose from the ranks and earned his commission by valour and good conduct in the long Napoleonic wars.[1] Promotion it was, perhaps, that emboldened him to marry in the same year. His wife was a girl of surpassing beauty, a Miss Oliver, of Castle Oliver, wherever that may be, and a descendant of the Count de Montalvo, a Spanish grandee, who had lost his

[1] Historical Record of the 44th or East Essex Regiment (1864), by Thomas Carter, of the Adjutant-General's Office.

immense estates in the wars. The ancestors of this unfortunate noble (we are told) were Moors, and came into Spain in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, which was certainly the worst possible moment they could have chosen for so doing. For this account of Mrs Gilbert's ancestry we are indebted to her daughter, whose names certainly suggest a Spanish origin. It was by her mournful second name, or rather by its lightsome diminutive, Lola, that she was ever afterwards known. Perhaps she was so called in remembrance of one of the proud Montalvos. At all events, she never ceased to cherish the belief in her half-Spanish blood. When she was a romantic young girl—for young girls *were* romantic seventy years ago—Spain obsessed the Byronic caste of mind. It was regarded as the home of chivalry, romance, love, poetry, and adventure. To be ever so little Spanish was accounted a most enviable distinction. So it would be ungenerous of us to impugn Lola's claim to what she and her contemporaries considered an inestimable privilege. True or false, the idea was one she imbibed with her mother's milk — though I forgot to say that, according to her own statement, she was nourished at this early period by an Irish nurse.

I wish I could say in what religion the new daughter of the regiment was educated. Somewhere she says that her mother eloped with her father from a convent. The strong dislike she manifested in after years for the Roman Catholic Church may have been inspired by this circumstance, and suggests, at any rate, in one not keenly sensible of nice theological distinctions, some personal motive arising from a bitter experience.

If the baby Lola gave promise of the woman, Edward Gilbert must have been proud of his child—as proud of her as of his pretty wife and his hard-won commission. But those years in troubled Ireland must have been anxious ones for him. There is no evidence that he possessed private means, and to support a wife and child on the pay of an ensign in a marching regiment would necessitate economies of the most painful description. In the East, now that Europe was at peace, lay the only hope of immediately increased pay and rapid promotion. The establishment of the King's Own Borderers was reduced, in August 1822, from ten to eight companies, and Gilbert was able to obtain, in consequence, a transfer to the 44th of the line, already under orders for India. His appointment to his new regiment—

now the first battalion Essex regiment—is dated 10th October 1822. With his young wife and child he embarked, accordingly, for the land of promise. Probably the four-year-old Lola endured best of the three the unspeakable fatigue and tedium of that long, long journey round the Cape—a voyage which in those days it was no uncommon thing to prolong by a call at Rio de Janeiro. It was not till four months had been passed at the mercy of wind and wave that our weary travellers set foot in Calcutta.

The regiment was stationed at Fort William, and there the ensign's hopes of speedy advancement early received encouragement. At one time seventeen of his brother officers lay sick with the fever, and before six months had fled, the last post was sounded over the graves of Major Guthrie, Captain O'Reilly, and Lieutenants Twinberrow and Sargent. The unspoken question on every one's lips was, Whose turn next? In this Indian pest-house there must have been moments when the young mother, fearful for her husband and child, longed fiercely for the rain-drenched streets of Limerick. At last the regiment was ordered to Dinapore. The journey was effected, as was usual in those days, by water, an element to which the Gilberts were

now well accustomed. But here, instead of the monotonous expanse of ocean, they had slowly unfolded before them the strange and brightly-coloured panorama of the East — gorgeous, teeming cities, the dreadful, burning ghâts, rank jungle, dense forests, rich rice-fields. As the flotilla travelled only 12 or 14 miles a day, the passengers had ample time to stretch their limbs ashore, and to visit the towns and villages passed *en route*. The voyage, too, did not lack incident. On one occasion nine boats were swamped, and eight British redcoats went to swell the horrible procession of corpses which floats ever seaward down the Sacred River. Another night the Colonel's boat took fire, and the flames, spreading to other vessels, consumed the regimental band's music and instruments, which were so sorely needed to revive the drooping spirits of the fever-stricken troops.

However, in the excitement of taking up their new quarters at Dinapore, these evil omens were, no doubt, forgotten. Pretty women were rare in India in those days, and Mrs Gilbert received (from the men, at all events) a right royal welcome. She was acclaimed queen of the station, and, as her husband, the Ensign, became, of course, a person of consequence. This was

better than Ireland, after all. Dinapore was a fairly lively spot, and regimental society was not overshadowed, as at Calcutta, by the magnates of Government House. So Lola's mother flirted and danced, while Lola herself was petted by grey-haired generals and callow subs., and Lola's father began to dream of a captaincy. One day, in the early part of 1824, his place at the mess-table was vacant. The doctor looked in, and said "Cholera," and a few faces blanched. Craigie, the Ensign's best friend, hurried to his bedside. The dying man was speechless, but conscious. Beckoning to his friend, he placed his weeping wife's hand in his, and, having thus conveyed his last wish, died.

Lola was left fatherless before she was seven years old. She and her mother, she tells us, were promptly taken charge of by the wife of General Brown.

"The hearts of a hundred officers, young and old, beat all at once with such violence, that the whole atmosphere for ten miles round fairly throbbed with the emotion. But in this instance the general fever did not last long, for Captain Craigie led the young widow Gilbert to the altar himself. He was a man of high intellectual accomplishments, and soon after this marriage

his regiment was ordered back to Calcutta, and he was advanced to the rank of major."

We are thus able to identify Lola's stepfather with John Craigie of the Bengal Army, who was gazetted Captain on 11th May 1816, and Major, 18th May 1825. Four years later he attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.[1] He seems to have been a generous, warm-hearted man, who never forgot the trust placed in him by his dying friend at Dinapore. To him Lola was indebted for such education as she received in India. That was not of a very thorough character. With a mother who, we learn, was passionately fond of society and amusement, little Miss Gilbert must have passed most of her time in the company of ayahs and orderlies, picking up the native tongue with the facility which distinguished her in after life, and domineering tremendously over idolatrous sepoys and dignified khansamahs. I can imagine her on the knees of veterans at her father's table, delighting them with her beauty, and still more with her boldness and childish ready wit. Of course, His Excellency (Lord William Bentinck) would take notice of the pretty, pert child of handsome

[1] Dodwell and Miles, Indian Army List, 1760-1834.

Mrs Craigie, and it is not to be wondered at that all her life she should hanker after the atmosphere of a court, remembering the vice-regal glories of Calcutta.

It seems to have dawned upon Mrs Craigie, not very long after her second marriage, that her daughter was, to use a common expression, running wild. A little discipline, it was felt, would do her good. It was decided to send her home to her stepfather's relatives at Montrose. With screams, sobs, and wild protests, the eight-year-old girl accordingly found herself torn from the redcoats and brown faces that she loved, once more to undertake that terrible four months' journey to a land which she had probably completely forgotten.

The contrast between Calcutta, the gorgeous city of palaces, and Montrose, the dour, wintry burgh among the sandhills by the northern sea, must have chilled the heart of the passionate child. Yet she does not seem in after life to have thought with any bitterness of the place, and speaks with respect, if not affection, of her new guardian, Major Craigie's father. She writes:—

"This venerable man had been provost of Montrose for nearly a quarter of a century, and

the dignity of his profession, as well as the great respectability of his family, made every event connected with his household a matter of some public note, and the arrival of the queer, wayward, little East Indian girl was immediately known to all Montrose. The peculiarity of her dress, and I dare say not a little eccentricity in her manners, served to make her an object of curiosity and remark; and very likely she perceived that she was somewhat of a public character, and may have begun, even at this early age, to assume airs and customs of her own."

That is, indeed, very likely. Further information concerning our heroine's stay at Montrose we have little. She does not seem to have retained any very vivid impressions of her childhood. One of the few events in the meagre history of the little Scots town she was privileged to witness—the erection of the suspension bridge from Inchbrayock over the Esk. Here it was, too, that she formed that friendship with the girl, afterwards Mrs Buchanan, which was destined to form her greatest consolation in the evening of her days. The Craigies were strict Calvinists, and some of her biographers have assumed, in consequence, that they must have treated the child with rigour and inspired her with a distaste for religion. She never said so, as far as I

can ascertain. On the contrary, throughout her life she evinced a marked bias in favour of Protestantism, which is quite as compatible with an erotic temperament as was the zeal for Catholicism displayed by the favourite mistress of Charles II.

Her parents, says Lola, being somehow impressed with the idea that she was being petted and spoiled (by the gloomy Calvinists aforesaid), she was removed to the family of Sir Jasper Nicolls, of London. It is to be observed that neither now nor after do we hear of her father's relatives, who one would suppose to have been her proper guardians. This circumstance certainly discountenances the theory of Edward Gilbert's exalted parentage. Sir Jasper Nicolls, K.C.B., Major-General, was succeeded by Major-General Watson in the command of the Meerut Division in 1831, in which year it may be presumed he returned to England, and took his friend Craigie's stepdaughter under his wing. Like most Indian officers, he preferred to spend his pension out of England, and gladly hurried his girls off to Paris to complete their education. They missed the July Revolution by a year; but all France was presently ringing with the exploits of the brave Duchesse de Berry, who

became the idol of the *pensionnats.* To Lola, no doubt, she seemed a heroine worthier of imitation than the young Princess Alexandrina Victoria, who was just then touring her uncle's dominions. The romantic fever was at its height in Paris. To her schoolfellows the beautiful Anglo-Indian girl, with her Spanish name and ancestry, must have appeared a new edition of De Musset's "Andalouse." The influences about her at this time tended to stimulate all that was romantic and adventurous in her temperament, and determined, perhaps, her action in the first great crisis of her life.

II

A RUNAWAY MATCH

II

A RUNAWAY MATCH

It was now fifteen years since Mrs Craigie had visited England, and rather more than ten since she had seen her daughter. She had been made aware that Lola's beauty far exceeded the promise of her childish years, and this she took care to make known to all the eligible bachelors of Bengal. The charms of the erstwhile pet of the 44th were eagerly discussed by men who had never seen her. Lonely writers in up-country stations brooded on her perfections, as advertised by Mrs Craigie, and came to the conclusion that she was precisely the woman wanted to convert their secluded establishments into homes. It was difficult to get a wife of the plainest description in the India of William IV.'s day, and the competition for the hand of the unknown beauty oversea was proportionately keen. If marriage by proxy were recognised by English law Lola's fate would have been sealed

long before she was aware of it. From a worldly point of view the most desirable of these ardent suitors was Sir Abraham Lumley, whom our heroine unkindly describes as a rich and gouty old rascal of sixty years, and Judge of the Supreme Court in India. We see that in that rude age it was not the custom to speak of sexagenarians as in the prime of life. To the venerable magistrate Mrs Craigie promised her daughter in marriage. Remembering the hard times she had gone through with her first husband, the penniless ensign, and forgetting, as we do when past thirty, how those hardships were lightened by love, she no doubt felt that she had acted extremely well by her daughter. Women's ideas on the subject of marriage are usually absolutely conventional, and since unions between men of sixty and girls of eighteen are not condemned by the official exponents of religion, you would never have persuaded Mrs Craigie that they were immoral. Outside the Decalogue (and the Police Regulations) all things are lawful. Well pleased with herself, the still handsome Anglo-Indian lady sailed for home in the early part of the year 1837, proposing to bring her daughter back with her to the bosom of Abraham.

She found Lola at Bath, whither she had been sent from Paris with Fanny Nicolls "to undergo the operation of what is properly called finishing their education." I do not suppose the meeting between mother and daughter was especially cordial, considering the temperament of the former and the long period of separation, but Mrs Craigie was delighted to find that report had nowise exaggerated the young girl's charms. This was also the private opinion of Mr Thomas James, a lieutenant in the 21st regiment of Native Infantry (Bengal), a young officer who had attached himself to Mrs Craigie on the voyage and accompanied her to Bath. The mother thought him quite safe, as he had told her that he was betrothed, and had consulted her about his prospects, or, rather, the want of them. The married ladies of India have always been full of maternal solicitude for poor young subalterns, who frequently repay their kindness with touching devotion. It was probably the wish to be useful to his benefactress that had drawn Mr James to Bath. Or it may have been that he wished to drink the waters, for I forgot to say that he had been ill during the voyage, and owed his recovery to Mrs Craigie's careful nursing.

Lola was staggered by the kindness and liberality of her mother. Visits to the milliner's and the dressmaker's succeeded each other with startling rapidity; jewellery, *lingerie*, all sorts of delightful things were showered upon her in bewildering profusion. Lieutenant James was kept on his legs all day, escorting the ladies to the *modistes* and running errands to Madame Jupon and Mademoiselle Euphrosine. At last the girl began to suspect that there must be some other motive for this excessive interest in her personal appearance than maternal fondness. She made bold one day (she tells us) to ask her mother what this was all about, and received for an answer that it did not concern her—that children should not be inquisitive, nor ask idle questions. (Lola is the only girl on record who protested that too much money was being spent on her wardrobe.) Her suspicions naturally increased tenfold. In her perplexity she sought information from the Lieutenant, of whose interest in her she had probably become conscious. Then she learnt the horrible truth. The wardrobe so fast accumulating was her *trousseau*, and she was the promised bride of a man in India old enough to be her grandfather. For a moment Lola was stunned. For a full-

blooded, passionate girl of eighteen the prospect was hideous. We may be sure, too, that her informant did not understate the personal disadvantages of Sir Abraham Lumley. Neither did he neglect this favourable opportunity to declare his own passion for the proposed victim, and to press his suit. An interview with Mrs Craigie followed.

"The little madcap cried and stormed alternately. The mother was determined—so was her child; the mother was inflexible—so was her child; and in the wildest language of defiance she told her that she never would be thus thrown alive into the jaws of death.

"Here, then, was one of those fatal family quarrels, where the child is forced to disobey parental authority, or to throw herself away into irredeemable wretchedness and ruin. It is certainly a fearful responsibility for a parent to assume of forcing a child to such alternatives. But the young Dolores sought the advice and assistance of her mother's friend. . . ."

She was probably a little in love with that friend, who was a fine-looking fellow, about a dozen years older than herself, and who had certainly conceived a violent passion for her. The situation was conventionally romantic. The books of that time were full of distressed damsels being forced into hateful unions. Lola, it is safe

to say, relished her new *rôle* of heroine not a little. So when her lover proposed a runaway match, she felt that she was bound to comply with the usual stage directions. After all, what could be more delightful?—an elopement in a post-chaise with a dashing young officer, an angry mamma in pursuit, and, happily, no angry papa, armed with pistols or horse-whip.

Away they went. Lola has left us no particulars of the flight. The runaways reappear, in the first month of Queen Victoria's reign, in the girl's native land, where she was placed under the protection of her lover's family. "They had a great muss (*sic*) in trying to get married." Lola was under age, and her mother's consent was indispensable. James sent his sister to Bath to intercede with Mrs Craigie. The lady was furious. Not only had her daughter upset her most cherished project, but had run off with her most devoted friend and admirer. Mrs Craigie was a prey to the most mortifying reflections. No doubt she asked Miss James what had become of the young lady to whom her brother had declared he was affianced. She probably said some very unkind things about the Lieutenant. At last, however, "good sense so far prevailed as to make her see that

nothing but evil and sorrow could come of her refusal, and she consented, but would neither be present at the wedding, nor send her blessing." We are not told if she sent the voluminous *trousseau*, which had been the cause of all the mischief. She returned soon after, I gather, to India, to announce to the unfortunate Sir Abraham the collapse of his matrimonial scheme.

Miss James returned to Ireland with the necessary authority, and Thomas James, Lieutenant, and Maria Dolores Eliza Rosanna Gilbert, spinster, were made man and wife in County Meath on the 23rd July 1837. The bride's reflections on this event are worth quoting:—

"So, in flying from that marriage with ghastly and gouty old age, the child lost her mother, and gained what proved to be only the outside shell of a husband, who had neither a brain which she could respect, nor a heart which it was possible for her to love. Runaway matches, like runaway horses, are almost sure to end in a smash up. My advice to all young girls who contemplate taking such a step is, that they had better hang or drown themselves just one hour before they start."

This warning was obviously intended to

counteract the dreadful example of the writer's subsequent life and adventures, and to dissuade ambitious young ladies from following in her footsteps. Lola did not, of course, believe what she said. Even "when wild youth's past" and the glamour of love has worn thin, no sensible woman could believe that she would have got much happiness out of life if it had been passed in wedlock with a man half a century her senior. Perhaps, however, Lola sadly reflected that if she had become Sir Abraham's wife, she would probably have become his widow a very few years after.

III

FIRST STEPS IN MATRIMONY

III

FIRST STEPS IN MATRIMONY

Thus Lola found herself in Ireland, the wife of a penniless subaltern—exactly the position of her mother twenty years before. "All for love and the world well lost," she might have exclaimed. There is no reason to suppose that disillusionment came to her any sooner than to other hot-headed and romantic young ladies similarly placed. She was accustomed to view her early married life in the bitter light of subsequent experience, and forgot all the sweets and raptures of first love. Women of her temperament always find it hard to believe that they ever really loved men whom they have since learned to hate. Even by her own account, those months in Ireland were not altogether unrelieved by the glitter for which her soul craved. Her husband took her to Dublin, she informs us, and presented her to the Lord-Lieutenant. His Excellency Lord Normanby was one of the

few good rulers England has placed over Ireland, and like most clever men, he was an admirer of pretty women. Lola seems to have been made much of by him. He paid her many compliments, among others this, "Women of your age are the queens of society"—a remark which may be addressed with equally good effect to ladies anywhere between seventeen and seventy. Mr James began to grow restive under the fire of admiration directed by great personages upon his young wife. It is not impossible to believe that she flirted. Her husband decided to withdraw her from the seductions of the viceregal court, and retired with her to some spot in the interior, the name of which has not been transmitted to us. Lola, in memoirs she contributed years after to a Parisian newspaper, describes her life in this retreat as unutterably tedious. The day was passed in hunting and eating, these exercises succeeding each other with the utmost regularity. Meanwhile, the system was sustained by innumerable cups of tea, taken at stated intervals, and with much deliberateness.

Ireland had changed since the emancipation of the Catholics. It was not with tea that the heroes of Charles Lever's time beguiled the tedium of existence.

"This dismal life," continues our heroine, "weighed on me to such an extent that I should assuredly have done something desperate if my husband had not just then been ordered to return to India." Lola, it will have been seen, entertained little affection for her native land. She had no recollection of her childhood there, and she never afterwards thought of the country except in connection with the detested husband of her youth.

In the second year of the Queen's reign she left Ireland, to return years after in very different circumstances. Her fondest memories were of the East, towards which she now gladly turned her face for the second time. "On the old trail, on the out trail," she sailed aboard the East Indiaman, *Blunt*, her husband at her side. There is a curious parallelism between her mother's life and her own up till now, which she could not have failed to notice. Her memories of the voyage strike me rather as having been specially spiced for the consumption of Parisian readers, than as an authentic relation. James, we are told, neglected his young wife, and exhibited an amazing capacity for absorbing porter. Finding the time heavy on her hands, Lola resorted to the commonest of all distrac-

tions on passenger ships—flirting. While her consort lay sleeping "like a boa-constrictor" in his bunk, his wife's admirers used to slip notes under the door, these serving her as spills for Mr James's pipe. The gentlemen who fell under the spell of Lola's fascinations at this stage of her career were three in number—a Spaniard called Enriquez, an Englishman, simply described as John, and the skipper himself. This "colossal sailor" seems to have been somewhat of a philosopher. One of his profound reflections has been handed down to us, and is worth recording: "Love is a pipe we fill at eighteen, and smoke till forty; and we rake the ashes till our exit."

Lola thus pictures as a man-enslaving Circe the girl who was described by a contemporary as a good little thing, merry and unaffected. I doubt if the flirtations here magnified into intrigues were very serious affairs, after all. It is rather pathetic, the woman's shame for the simplicity of the girl, and her evident desire to paint her redder than she was. It is probable that the girl would have been quite as much ashamed if she could have seen herself at thirty.

IV

INDIA SEVENTY YEARS AGO

IV

INDIA SEVENTY YEARS AGO

The land to which little Mrs James was eager to return seems to us now to have been a poor exchange for the rollicking Ireland of Lever's day. India in 1838, as for a score of years after, was under the rule of John Company. Collectors and writers of the Jos Sedley type were still able to shake the pagoda tree, and Englishmen in outlying provinces often became suddenly rich, how or why nobody asked, and only the natives cared. Indigo planters beat their half-caste wives to death, and English magistrates looked the other way. Our people died, like flies in autumn, of cholera, snake-bites, and the thousand and one fevers to which India was subject. We were still shut in by powerful native states. Ranjit Singh ruled in the Punjaub, the Baluchis in Scinde; there was yet a king in Oude and a rajah at Nagpûr. Slavery was only abolished in the British dominions that

very year, and Hindoo widows had but lately lost the privilege of burning themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres. The chronic famine had assumed slightly more serious proportions.

It was a land of loneliness, remote and isolated. A postal service had been introduced only the year before, and letters took at least three months to come from England. This was by the overland route, which was liable at any moment to interruption by the caprice of the Pasha of Egypt or the enterprise of Bedouins. There were, of course, no railways and no telegraphs. You travelled wherever possible by river, in boats called budgerows, which had not increased in speed since Ensign Gilbert's day. Going up the Ganges you might have seen the Danish flag waving over Serampore. If you were in a hurry and could afford it, you travelled *dâk*—that is, in a palanquin, carried by four bearers, who were changed at each stage like posting-horses. This method of travel—about the most uncomfortable, I conceive, ever devised by man—greatly impressed and interested Lola. She thought it repugnant to one's sense of humanity, but could not help observing the light-heartedness of the bearers. They jogged briskly along to the accompaniment of improvised songs,

which were not always flattering to their human load.

"I will give you a sample," says our traveller, "as well as it could be made out, of what I heard them sing while carrying an English clergyman who could not have weighed less than two hundred and twenty-five pounds. Each line of the following jargon was sung in a different voice :—

"'Oh, what a heavy bag!
No, it is an elephant;
He is an awful weight.
Let us throw his palki down,
Let us set him in the mud—
Let us leave him to his fate.
Ay, but he will beat us then
With a thick stick.
Then let's make haste and get along,
Jump along quickly!'

"And off they started in a jog-trot, which must have shaken every bone in his reverence's body, keeping chorus all the time of 'Jump along quickly,' until they were obliged to stop for laughing.

"They invariably (continues Lola) suit these extempore chants to the weight and character of their burden. I remember to have been exceedingly amused one day at the merry chant of my human horses as they started off on the run.

"'She's not heavy,
Cabbada [take care]!
Little baba [missie],
Cabbada!

Carry her swiftly,
Cabbada!
Pretty baba,
Cabbada!'

"And so they went on, singing and extemporising for the whole hour and a half's journey. It is quite a common custom to give them four annas (or English sixpence) apiece at the end of every stage, when fresh horses (*sic*) are put under the burden; but a gentleman of my acquaintance, who had been carried too slowly, as he thought, only gave them two annas apiece. The consequence was that during the next stage the men not only went faster, but they made him laugh with their characteristic song, the whole burden of which was: 'He has only given them two annas, because they went slowly; let us make haste and get along quickly, and then we shall get eight annas, and have a good supper.'"

The burden of the European's life in India at this period is voiced in "Marios'" poem, *The Long, Long, Indian Day.* It was the empire of *ennui.* A strongly puritanical tone, too, was observable in certain influential circles, and the clergy frequently discountenanced and condemned the poor efforts at relaxation made by officers and their wives. Dances and amateur theatricals were often the subject of censure from the pulpit. So the men fell back on brandy

pawnee, loo, and tiger-shooting. The women were worse off. To the Honourable Emily Eden we are indebted for some vivid pictures of Anglo-Indian society during the viceroyalty of her brother, Lord Auckland (1836 - 1842). They enable us to realise Lola's emotions and manner of life during her second visit to India. Miss Eden's compassionate interest was excited by

"a number of young ladies just come out by the last ships, looking so fresh and English, and longing to amuse themselves—and it must be such a bore at that age to be shut up for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four; and the one hour that they are out is only an airing just where the roads are watered. They have no gardens, no villages, no poor people, no schools, no poultry to look after—none of the occupations of young people. Very few of them are at ease with their parents; and, in short, it is a melancholy sight to see a new young arrival."

Another passage runs:—

"It is a melancholy country for wives at the best, and I strongly advise you never to let your girls marry an East Indian. There was a pretty Mrs —— dining here yesterday, quite a child in look, who married just before the *Repulse* sailed, and landed here about ten days ago. She goes on next week to Neemuch, a place at the farthest extremity of India, where there

is not another European woman, and great part of the road to it is through jungle, which is only passable occasionally from its unwholesomeness. She detests what she has seen of India, and evidently begins to think 'papa and mamma' were right in withholding for a year their consent to her marriage. I think she wishes they had held out another month. There is another, Mrs ——, who is only *fifteen*, who married when we were at the Cape, . . . and went straight on to her husband's station, where for five months she had never seen a European. He was out surveying all day, and they lived in a tent. She has utterly lost her health and spirits, and though they have come down here for three weeks' furlough, she has never been able even to call here [at Government House]. He came to make her excuse, and said, with a deep sigh: 'Poor girl! she must go back to her solitude. She hoped she could have gone out a little in Calcutta, to give her something to think of.' And then, if these poor women have children, they must send them away just as they become amusing. It is an abominable place."

This was not realised at once by Mrs James, whose first season (she tells us) was passed "in the gay and fashionable city of Calcutta." There she became an acknowledged beauty. Not long after the outbreak of the first Afghan War she was torn away from the comparative brilliance

of the capital, and accompanied her husband, most reluctantly, to Karnál, a town between Delhi and Simla, on the Jumna Canal. The place is no longer a military station. At this juncture, happily for us, a flood of light is poured upon Lola's character and history by the letters of Miss Eden, dated from Simla and Karnál in the latter part of the year 1839. I include some extracts not directly relating to Lola, as they describe scenes in which she must have taken part, and which formed the background against which she moved.

"*Sunday, 8th September* [1839].

"Simla is much moved just now by the arrival of a Mrs J[ames], who has been talked of as a great beauty of the year, and that drives every other woman, with any pretensions in that line, quite distracted, with the exception of Mrs N., who, I must say, makes no fuss about her own beauty, nor objects to it in other people. Mrs J[ames] is the daughter of a Mrs C[raigie], who is still very handsome herself, and whose husband is Deputy-Adjutant-General, or some military authority of that kind. She sent this only child to be educated at home, and went home herself two years ago to see her. On the same ship was Mr J., a poor ensign, going home on sick leave. Mrs C. nursed him and took care of him, and took him to see her daughter, who was a

girl of fifteen [*sic*] at school. He told her he was engaged to be married, consulted her about his prospects, and in the meantime privately married this girl at school. It was enough to provoke any mother, but as it now cannot be helped, we have all been trying to persuade her for the last year to make it up, as she frets dreadfully about her only child. She has withstood it till now, but at last consented to ask them for a month, and they arrived three days ago. The *rush on the road* was remarkable, and one or two of the ladies were looking absolutely nervous. But nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the result, for Mrs James looked lovely, and Mrs Craigie had set up for her a very grand jonpaun [kind of sedan-chair], with bearers in fine orange and brown liveries, and the same for herself; and James is a sort of smart-looking man, with bright waistcoats and bright teeth, with a showy horse, and he rode along in an attitude of respectful attention to *ma belle mère*. Altogether it was an imposing sight, and I cannot see any way out of it but magnanimous admiration. They all called yesterday when I was at the waterfalls, and F[anny] thought her very pretty."

"*Tuesday*, 10*th September*.

"We had a dinner yesterday. Mrs James is undoubtedly very pretty, and such a merry, unaffected girl. She is only seventeen now [twenty-one, in fact], and does not look so old, and when one thinks that she is married to a

junior lieutenant in the Indian army fifteen years older than herself, and that they have 160 rupees a month, and are to pass their whole lives in India, I do not wonder at Mrs Craigie's resentment at her having run away from school.

"There are seventeen more officers come up to Simla on leave for a month, partly in the hope of a little gaiety at the end of the rains; and then the fancy fair has had a great reputation since last year, and as they will all spend money, they are particularly welcome. . . ."

"*Wednesday, 11th September.*

"We had a large party last night, the largest we have had in Simla, and it would have been a pretty ball anywhere, there were so many pretty people. The retired wives, now that their husbands are on the march back from Cabul, ventured out, and got through one evening without any prejudice to their characters."

Are regimental ladies in India nowadays expected to keep in seclusion while their husbands are on active service? I think not.

"*Monday, 16th September.*

"We are going to a ball to-night, which the married gentlemen give us; and instead of being at the only public room, which is a broken, tumble-down place, it is to be at the C.'s [the Craigies'?], who very good-naturedly give up their house for it."

" Wednesday, 18th September.

" The ball went off with the greatest success: transparencies of the taking of Ghaznee, ' Auckland ' in all directions, arches and verandahs made up of flowers; a whist table for his lordship, which is always a great relief at these balls; and every individual at Simla was there. There was a supper room for us, made up of velvet and gold hangings belonging to the Durbar, and a standing supper all night for the company in general, at which one very fat lady was detected in eating five suppers. . . . It was kept up till five, and altogether succeeded."

" Friday, 27th September.

" We had our fancy fair on Wednesday, which went off with great *éclat*, and was really a very amusing day, and, moreover, produced 6,500 rupees, which, for a very small society, is an immense sum. X. and L. and a Captain C. were disguised as gipsies, and the most villainous-looking set possible; and they came on to the fair, and sang an excellent song about our poor old Colonel and a little hill fort that he has been taking; but after the siege was over, he found no enemy in it, otherwise, it was a gallant action.

" We had provided luncheon at a large booth with the sign of the ' Marquess of Granby.' L. E. was old Weller, and so disguised I could not guess him; X. was Sam Weller; K., Jingle; and Captain C., Mrs Weller; Captain Z., merely a waiter, with one or two other gentlemen; but

they all acted very well up to their characters, and the luncheon was very good fun. . . . The afternoon ended with races—a regular racing-stand, and a very tolerable course for the hills; all the gentlemen in satin jackets and jockey caps, and a weighing-stand — in short, everything got up regularly. Everybody likes these out-of-door amusements at this time of year, and it is a marvel to me how well X. and K. and L. E. contrive to make all their plots and disguises go on. I suppose in a very small society it is easier than it would be in England, and they have all the assistance of servants to any amount, who do all they are told, and merely think the 'sahib lóg' are mad."

" Tuesday, 15th October.

"The Sikhs are here. Our ball for them last night went off very well. The chiefs were in splendid gold dresses, and certainly very gentleman-like men. They sat bolt upright on their chairs, with their feet dangling, and I dare say suffered agonies from cramp. C. said we saw them amazingly divided between the necessity of listening to George [Lord Auckland], and their native feelings of not *seeming* surprised, and their curiosity at men and women dancing together. I think that they learned at least two figures of the quadrilles by heart, for I saw Gholâb Singh, the commander of the Goorcherras, who has been with Europeans before, expounding the dancing to the others."

Lola's month at Simla had now expired, but she probably postponed her departure to witness the reception of these chiefs. Having been reconciled with her mother — partly, it seems, through the kindly intervention of the Governor-General's sister, and partly, as she afterwards declared, through her stepfather—she returned with her husband to his cantonment. Here she was fortunate again to attract the attention of the viceregal party.

Miss Eden writes from Karnál, under date 13th November 1839 :—

"We had the same display of troops on arriving, except that a bright yellow General N. has taken his liver complaint home, and a pale primrose General D., who has been renovating some years at Bath, has come out to take his place. We were at home in the evening, and it was an immense party, but except that pretty Mrs James who was at Simla, and who looked like a star amongst the others, the women were all plain.

"I don't wonder if a tolerable-looking girl comes up the country that she is persecuted with proposals. . . . That Mrs —— we always called the little corpse is still at Karnál. She came and sat herself down by me, upon which Mr K., with great presence of mind, offered me his arm, and said to George that he was taking me away from that corpse. 'You are quite

right,' said George. 'It would be very dangerous sitting on the same sofa; we don't know what she died of.'"

"Sunday, 17th November.

"We left Karnál yesterday morning. Little Mrs James was so unhappy at our going that we asked her to come and pass the day here, and brought her with us. She went from tent to tent, and chattered all day, and visited her friend Mrs ——, who is with the camp. I gave her a pink silk gown, and it was altogether a very happy day for her evidently. It ended in her going back to Karnál on my elephant, with E. N. by her side and Mr James sitting behind, and she had never been on an elephant before, and thought it delightful. She is very pretty, and a good little thing, apparently, but they are very poor, and she is very young and lively, and if she falls into bad hands she would soon laugh herself into foolish scrapes. At present the husband and wife are very fond of each other, but a girl who marries at fifteen hardly knows what she likes."

V

RIVEN BONDS

V

RIVEN BONDS

Miss Eden's misgivings were warranted by the events. "Husband and wife are very fond of each other"—that was, doubtless, true, but Lola's lips would have curled had she read the passage in after years. Abandoned by the departure of the viceregal party once more to the slender social resources of Karnál, the young wife, I conjecture, fretted and moped. The glitter of the Court made the boredom of the cantonment all the more oppressive. The year after the Simla festivities Karnál had another distinguished visitor, the famous Dost Mohammed Khan, Amir of Kabul, but as during his six months' stay he was kept a close prisoner in the fort, his presence could not have sensibly relieved the monotony. Lieutenant James's subsequent readiness to divorce his wife proves that he had no very strong attachment to her, and gives some colour to her allegations against him. Of course,

it is safe to conclude that both were in the wrong, or, more truthfully, had made a mistake. So long, however, as people regard marriage more as a contract than a relation, each party will be anxious to throw the responsibility for the rupture upon the other. As the husband had the opportunity of stating his case in the law courts, it is only fair that the wife should be allowed to plead hers here. Her version of the circumstances which brought about the breach is as follows:—

"She was taken to visit a Mrs Lomer—a pretty woman, who was about thirty-three years of age, and was a great admirer of Captain (*sic*) James. [His bright waistcoats and bright teeth were not without their effect, we see.] Her husband was a blind fool enough; and though Captain James's little wife, Lola, was not quite a fool, it is likely enough that she did not care enough about him to keep a look-out upon what was going on between himself and Mrs Lomer. So she used to be peacefully sleeping every morning when the Captain [read Lieutenant] and Mrs Lomer were off for a sociable ride on horseback. In this way things went on for a long time, when one morning Captain James and Mrs Lomer did not get back to breakfast, and so the little Mrs James and Mr Lomer breakfasted alone, wondering what had become of the morning riders.

"But all doubts were soon cleared up by the fact fully coming to light that they had really eloped to Neilghery Hills. Poor Lomer stormed, and raved, and tore himself to pieces, not having the courage to attack any one else. And little Lola wondered, cried a little, and laughed a good deal, especially at Lomer's rage."

The injured husband, apparently, was never pieced together again, as we do not hear that he ever instituted any proceedings against the seducer of his wife. It is true that by Lola's account they may be considered to have put themselves beyond his reach, for the Neilghery Hills lie, as the crow flies, about 1,400 miles from Karnál, and a stern chase in a palanquin over that distance is an undertaking from which even Menelaus would have shrank. Nor did the peccant Lieutenant James think it worth while to resign his commission.

Whatever may have been the immediate cause, it is clear that husband and wife were on bad terms when the cantonment at Karnál was broken up in the year 1841. Lola took refuge under her mother's roof at Calcutta. She admits that her reception was cold, and that Mrs Craigie pressed her to return to Europe. On this course she finally decided, probably without great reluctance. It was given out, and not perhaps

altogether untruly, that she was leaving India for the benefit of her health. Her husband came down to Calcutta, and himself saw her aboard the good ship, *Larkins*. Her stepfather, to whose relations in Scotland she was again to be confided, was much affected at her departure.

"Large tears rolled down his cheeks when he took her on board the vessel; and he testified his affection and his care by placing in the hands of the little grass-widow a cheque for a thousand pounds on a house in London."

Thus for the second and last time Lola saw the swampy shores of Bengal receding from her across the waves. She was never again to see India or those who bid her adieu. The merry, unaffected schoolgirl of Simla had become in one short year a disappointed, disillusioned woman. While husband and wife exchanged cold farewells, probably neither expected or wished to see the other again. Both had made a mistake, and both knew it. Now they were placing half a world between them. Lola's heart must have lightened, as the good ship sped before the wind southwards across the Indian Ocean. Accustomed to shipboard, the *désagréments* of the voyage were nothing to her, and she im-

mediately began to take an interest in her companions. She speaks of a Mr and Mrs Sturges, Boston people, who were nominally in charge of her; and of a Mrs Stevens, another American lady, a very gay woman, who had some influence in supporting her determination not to go to the Craigies' on reaching England. There was a Mr Lennox on board, sometimes described as an aide-de-camp to some governor, who also may have had something to do with this resolution. It all came about as Lord Auckland's sister had feared. Lola had fallen into evil hands, and laughed herself into a bad scrape. She had been accustomed to admiration; she was young, beautiful, and passionate. Her heart was empty; she was angered against her husband. She was by no means unwilling to face the possibility of a final separation from him. Lennox remains for us the shadowiest of personalities, but his disappearance, implying abandonment of the woman he had compromised, tells against him. In this instance I think we may safely conclude that the man was to blame.

Out of affection for him, then, or a determination to lead her own life, uncontrolled and unshackled, Mrs James, on arriving in London, flatly refused to accompany Mr David Craigie,

"a blue Scotch Calvinist," whom she found awaiting her.

"At first he used arguments and persuasion, and finding that these failed, he tried force; and then, of course, there was an explosion, which soon settled the matter, and convinced Mr David Craigie that he might go back to the little dull town of Perth as soon as he pleased, without the little grass-widow. Now she was left in London, sole mistress of her own fate. She had, besides the cheque given her by her stepfather, between five and six thousand dollars' worth of various kinds of jewellery, making her capital, all counted, about ten thousand dollars — a very considerable portion of which disappeared in less than one year by a sort of insensible perspiration, which is a disease very common to the purses of ladies who have never been taught the value of money."

It was in the early spring of 1842 that Lola set foot in London. Considering the rapidity for those times with which her husband became informed of her next movements, these must have been amazingly open; and it is hard to resist the conclusion that she was deliberately trying to bring about a divorce. She knew that the English law grants no relief to those who come to it both with clean hands. She knew also that so long as her husband neither starved

nor beat her, she could not set the law in motion against him. English law, supposed to vindicate the sanctity of marriage, sets a premium on adultery and cruelty: these are the only avenues of escape from unhappy unions into which high-minded men and women may have been betrayed by youthful folly, by over-persuasion, by sentiments they innocently overestimated. If Lola Gilbert at the age of eighteen had signed a bill for ten pounds, the courts would have annulled the transaction, on the ground that her youth rendered her incapable of appreciating its gravity. As it was, she had signed away her life—a less important thing than property — and our Rhadamanthine law sternly held her to her bargain.

James was not slow to avail himself of the pretext she afforded him. He instituted through his proctors a suit against her for divorce in the Consistory Court of London, to which jurisdiction in all matrimonial causes at that time belonged. Lola, as he probably expected she would do, ignored the proceedings from first to last. The case was heard before Dr Lushington on 15th December 1842. Mrs James was accused of misconduct with Mr Lennox on board the ship *Larkins*, and of subsequently

cohabiting with him at the Imperial Hotel, Covent Garden, and in lodgings in St James's. The court was satisfied with the proofs adduced, and pronounced a divorce *a mensâ et thoro*. In modern legal language this was a judicial separation. These two people, though they were to live apart, were sentenced never to marry again during the lifetime of each other. It is by such dispositions that the law of England proposes to promote morality and the interests of society.

Both lover and husband disappear from the scene. James rose to the rank of captain, retired from the Indian army in 1856, and died in 1871. He never crossed Lola's path again, and she ever afterwards referred to him with contempt and bitterness. If it was in any vindictive spirit that he divorced her, he would have done well to remember how in former years he had taken advantage of her youth and inexperience. It was a squalid ending to the romantic runaway match. It would be interesting to know with what emotions Captain James heard of his ex-wife's adventures in high places in the years that followed. It must have seemed odd that monarchs should risk their crowns for the charms that he so lightly prized. Perhaps his wonder

was not untinged with regret. More likely it might have been written of him as of Lola :—

> "Who have loved and ceased to love, forget
> That ever they lived in their lives, they say—
> Only remember the fever and fret,
> And the pain of love that was all his pay."

Mrs Craigie put on mourning as though her child was dead, and sent out to her friends the customary notifications. The good old Deputy-Adjutant-General alone thought kindly of Lola.

VI

LONDON IN THE 'FORTIES

VI

LONDON IN THE 'FORTIES

To a woman in Lola's situation, London in the early 'forties offered every inducement to go to the devil. Between a roaring maelstrom of the coarsest libertinism, on the one hand, and an impregnable barrier of heartless puritanism on the other, her destruction was well-nigh inevitable. The hotchpotch of unorganised humanity that we call Society seldom presented an uglier appearance than it did in the first decade of Victoria's reign. Sir Mulberry Hawk and Pecksniff are types of the two contending forces. Blackguardism was matched against snivelling cant. Luckily, the victory fell to neither. Those were the days of Crockfords, of Vauxhall, of the spunging-house, of public executions turned into popular festivals; when gentlemen of fashion painted policemen pea-green, and beat them till they were senseless; when peers got drunk and the people starved. Opposed to this debauchery was a religion of convention and

propriety, narrow, stupid, and un-Christlike—the cult of the correct and the respectable, the fetishes to which Lady Flora Hastings and many another woman were coldly sacrificed.

In spite of Sir Mulberry and Mr Pecksniff, however, Lola, ex-Mrs James, had no intention of going under. Her exclusion from society, after her wearisome experiences in India, she probably regarded as no great hardship. Her youth, her sprightliness, and her beauty made her many friends. Some of these as quickly became enemies, when they discovered that a divorced woman is not necessarily for sale. More than one *roué* vowed vengeance against the girl who, with bursts of laughter and dangerous gusts of anger, rejected the offer of his protection. It was, perhaps, in this way she offended the elegant Lord Ranelagh, who was then swaggering about in the Spanish cloak he had worn in the Carlist Wars. Lola was strong enough to swim in the maelstrom. Independence and adversity brought out the latent force in the character of the "good little thing" of Simla. Instead of looking out for a refuge, she sought a career.

She turned, of course, towards the stage, the one profession in Early Victorian times that

offered any promise to an ambitious woman. She took more pains to acquire a knowledge of her art than are deemed necessary by most beautiful aspirants nowadays. She studied under Miss Fanny Kelly, a gifted actress, who had distinguished herself by her efforts to improve the social status of her profession, and who had opened a dramatic school for women adjacent to what is now the Royalty Theatre. Lola describes Miss Kelly as a lady as worthy in the acts of her private life as she was gifted in genius. This opinion was shared by all the contemporaries of the venerable actress. In after years Mr Gladstone thought fit to recognise her services to the theatre by a royal grant of one hundred and fifty pounds, but the money arrived in time only to be expended on a memorial over her grave in the dismal cemetery at Brompton. Since Lola was a friend of Miss Kelly, she must have been very far from being the depraved character she is represented by some.

With all the goodwill in the world, the experienced mistress could not make an actress of her beautiful pupil, who accordingly determined to approach the stage through a back-door. If talent of the intellectual order was

denied her, she could fall back on her physical advantages. She determined to become a dancer. She was instructed for four months by a Spanish professor, and then (so she assures us) underwent a further training at Madrid. It was now that she assumed the name of Lola Montez—so soon to be known throughout Europe. She passed herself off as a Spaniard, partly, no doubt, for professional reasons, and partly to conceal her identity with the wife of Captain James. Society can hardly expect its quarry to step out into the open to be shot at. Her beauty and her dancing so impressed Benjamin Lumley, the experienced director of Her Majesty's Theatre, that it was on his stage that she actually made her first appearance.

The morning papers of Saturday, 3rd June 1843, announced accordingly that between the acts of the opera (*Il Barbiere di Seviglia*), Donna (*sic*) Lola Montez, of the Teatro Real, Seville, would make her first appearance in this country, in the original Spanish dance, "El Olano." Attracted by this advertisement, a critic, who afterwards wrote under the pseudonym of "Q.," called at the theatre, and was presented to the *débutante*. In her he recognised a lady living opposite his lodgings in Grafton Street, Mayfair,

who had long been the object of his silent adoration. He dwells on her extreme vivacity, on her brilliancy of conversation, and on her foreign accent, which struck him as assumed. She was persuaded to give a rehearsal for his special benefit.

"At that period," he goes on to say, "her figure was even more attractive than her face, lovely as the latter was. Lithe and graceful as a young fawn, every movement that she made seemed instinct with melody as she prepared to commence the dance. Her dark eyes were blazing and flashing with excitement, for she felt that I was willing to admire her. In her *pose*, grace seemed involuntarily to preside over her limbs and dispose their attitude. Her foot and ankle were almost faultless. Nadaud, the violinist, drew the bow across his instrument, and she began to dance. No one who has seen her will quarrel with me for saying that she was not, and is not, a finished *danseuse*, but all who have will as certainly agree with me that she possesses every element which could be required, with careful study in her youth, to make her eminent in her then vocation. As she swept round the stage, her slender waist swayed to the music, and her graceful neck and head bent with it, like a flower that bends with the impulse given to its stem by the changing and fitful temper of the wind."[1]

[1] "You have Heard of Them," New York, 1854.

On that eventful June evening, then, manager, critics, not least of all Lola herself, confidently looked forward to a striking success. The house was crowded, and many notabilities were present. There were the King of Hanover, the Queen-Dowager, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. There was also Lola's old enemy, my Lord Ranelagh, who with a party of friends occupied one of the two omnibus-boxes—an admirable point from which to examine the ankles and calves of the long-skirted ballet-girls. When the curtain rose in the *entr'acte*, a Moorish chamber was revealed. On either side stood a damsel, gazing expectantly towards the draped entrance at the back of the stage. A moment later and there glided through this a figure enveloped in a mantilla. One of the handmaids snatched away this drapery, and the commanding form of Donna Lola Montez was revealed in all its glory.

"And a lovely picture it is to contemplate! There is before you the perfection of Spanish beauty — the tall, handsome person, the full, lustrous eye, the joyous, animated face, and the intensely raven hair. She is dressed, too, in the brightest of colours: the petticoat is dappled with flaunting tints of red, yellow, and violet, and its showy diversities of hue are enforced by

the black velvet bodice above, which confines the bust with an unscrupulous pinch. Presently this Audalusian *Papagena* lifts her arms, and the sharp, merry crack of the castanets is heard. She has commenced one of the merry dances of her nation, and many a piquant grace does she unfold."[1]

The audience are bewitched, enraptured. The stage is strewn with bouquets. Suddenly from the right omnibus-box comes the surprised exclamation: "Why, it's Betty James!" Lord Ranelagh has recognised the woman who rebuffed him, and hurriedly whispers to his friends. Above the applause from stalls and gallery, there is heard on the stage, at least, a prolonged and ominous hiss. My lord's friends in the opposite box act upon the hint, and the hissing grows louder and more insistent. The body of the audience, knowing nothing about the matter, conclude that the dancer cannot know her business, and presently begin to hiss, too. In ten minutes more the curtain comes down upon her, and Lola's career as a dancer is terminated in England.

Lord Ranelagh had had his revenge. This species of blackguardism was only too common in those days. The notorious Duke of Brunswick

[1] *Morning Herald*, 8th June 1843.

that same year had gone with his attorney, Mr Vallance, and a party of friends, to Covent Garden Theatre, for the express purpose of hooting down an actor, Gregory, who took the part of Faust. He succeeded in his design, and bragged about it afterwards. In Early Victorian times the theatre was completely under the thumb of certain aristocratic sets. The exasperated Lumley was powerless to resist the fiat of these gilded snobs. Lola Montez, they insisted, must never appear on his stage again. He obeyed. The Press was very far from imitating his subserviency. The *Era* and *Morning Herald* praised the new *danseuse* in what seem to us extravagant terms, and deliberately ignored the inglorious *dénouement* of her performance. Indeed, but for the pen of "Q." we might be left to share the surprise expressed at her disappearance by the *Illustrated London News*, which, ironically perhaps, suggested that the votaries of what might be called the classical dance had set their faces against the national.

Lola herself was under no misapprehension as to the cause and authors of her defeat. She wrote to the *Era* on 13th June, protesting passionately against a report that was being circulated to the effect that she had long been

known in London as a disreputable character. She positively asserted that she was a native of Seville, and had never before been in London. She complains of the cruel calumnies that had got abroad concerning her, and says that she has instructed her lawyer to prosecute their utterers. Of course, the greater part of this statement was untrue, but she had her back against the wall, and with their reputation, social and professional, and means of livelihood at stake, few women would have acted otherwise. My own view is that after her affair with Lennox, Lola tried hard "to keep straight," and made powerful enemies in consequence. The alliance of Pecksniff and Sir Mulberry proved too strong for her.

VII

WANDERJAHRE

VII

WANDERJAHRE

London, then, was closed to Lola. She was recognised, and for the divorced wife of Lieutenant James there were no prospects of a career. Her defeat determined her to aim higher, not lower, as most women would have done. In the English country towns she would have been quite unknown, and might have earned a modest competence. But her experience of Montrose and Meath did not predispose her towards the provincial atmosphere. Devoting England and its serpent seed to the infernal gods, she took wing to Brussels. So rapidly were her preparations made that when "Q." called the very morning after the "frost" at Her Majesty's at her apartments in Grafton Street, he found her gone—none knew whither. We must feel sorry for our anonymous friend, for it is evident from his confessions that Lola's blue eyes had bored a big hole in his heart. He

consoled himself for her loss by writing (I suspect) some of the flattering notices on her performance to which reference has been made.

It is impossible to trace his enchantress's movements in their proper sequence during the next nine or ten months (June 1843 to March 1844). We find her at Brussels, Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw, and St Petersburg. She reached the Belgian capital practically with an empty purse. She afterwards said[1] that she went there partly because she had not enough money wherewith to go to Paris, partly because she hoped to make her way on to The Hague. She proposed to lay siege to the heart of his Dutch Majesty William II., then a man fifty-one years of age. She had, quite probably, met his son, the Prince of Orange, who was visiting Lord Auckland about the time she was at Simla, and had heard tales in Calcutta about the Dutch Court. The House of Orange has not been fortunate in its domestic relations. It is said that during the last king's first experience of wedlock, the heads of chamberlains often intercepted the books aimed by the Royal spouses at each other, while

[1] "An Englishman in Paris," 1892. The author of this book was A. D. Vandam, who could not have had this from Lola personally, seeing that he was born in 1842.

the whole palace re-echoed with the slamming of doors and the crash of crockery. William II., though not possessed of the reputation of his son and grandson, the celebrated "*Citron*," was known to be on bad terms with his Russian wife, Anna Pavlovna. He seemed to Lola a promising subject for the exercise of her powers of fascination. The design, if she ever really entertained it, was not one that moralists could applaud, but in extenuation it must be urged that Lola's late defeat could not have encouraged her to persevere in the path of virtue. However, the Dutch project came to nothing, and the display of our heroine's statecraft was reserved for another capital and another day.

In Brussels she found herself friendless and penniless. She was reduced to singing in the streets to save herself from starvation—she who only four years before had been borne from the stately Indian Court enthroned on the Viceroy's elephant! Her distress is rather to the credit of her reputation, for it would have been easy enough for so beautiful a woman to have found a wealthy protector in the Belgian capital. She was noticed by a man, whom she believed to be a German, who took her with him to Warsaw. "He spoke many languages," says Lola, "but

he was not very well off himself. However, he was very kind, and when we got to Warsaw, managed to get me an engagement at the Opera."[1] I cannot help wishing that Lola had given us some account of a journey that must have been performed in a carriage right across Central Europe from Belgium to Poland.

Warsaw in 1844 must have been as cheerless a spot as any in Europe. The great insurrection of 1831 had been suppressed with ruthless severity by the soldiers of the Tsar, and there was not a family of rank in the city that was not mourning for some one of its members who had passed beyond the ken of the living, into dread Siberia. Order reigned at Warsaw, indeed, in its conqueror's famous phrase, but it was order obtained only with the knout and the bayonet. The Polish language was barely tolerated, the Catholic religion proscribed. Women, half-naked, were publicly flogged for their attachment to their faith, school-boys and school-girls sent to perish beyond the Urals. The secret service ramified through every grade of society. Fathers distrusted their sons, husbands feared to discover in their own wives the tools of the Muscovite Government. To this day Poles are

[1] Vandam, "An Englishman in Paris."

seldom free from the nightmare of the Russian spy. The present writer remembers how, some years ago, at Bern, in the capital of a free republic, a Polish medical man refused, with every symptom of apprehension, to discuss the condition of his country within the longest ear-shot of a third party.

Yet unhappy Warsaw, under the heel of the terrible Paskievich, could be coaxed into a smile by the flashing eyes of the new Andalusian dancer. Her beauty enraptured the Poles, and drew from one of their dramatic critics the following elaborate panegyric:—

"Lola possesses twenty-six of the twenty-seven points on which a Spanish writer insists as essential to feminine beauty — and the real connoisseurs among my readers will agree with me when I confess that blue eyes and black hair appear to me more ravishing than black eyes and black hair. The points enumerated by the Spanish writer are: three white—the skin, the teeth, the hands; three black—the eyes, eye-lashes, and eyebrows; three red—the lips, the cheeks, the nails; three long — the body, the hair, the hands; three short—the ears, the teeth, the legs; three broad—the bosom, the forehead, the space between the eyebrows; three full—the lips, the arms, the calves; three small—the waist, the hands, the feet; three thin — the fingers, the hair, the lips. All these perfections

are Lola's, except as regards the colour of her eyes, which I, for one, would not wish to change. Silky hair, rivalling the gloss of the raven's wing, falls in luxuriant folds down her back; on the slender, delicate neck, whose whiteness shames the swan's down, rests the beautiful head. How, too, shall I describe Lola's bosom, if words fail me to describe the dazzling whiteness of her teeth? What the pencil could not portray, certainly the pen cannot.

> "'Vedeansi accesi entro le gianci belle
> Dolci fiamme di rose e di rubini,
> E nel ben sen per entro un mar di latte
> Tremolando nutar due poma intatte.'

"Lola's little feet hold the just balance between the feet of the Chinese and French ladies. Her fine, shapely calves are the lowest rungs of a Jacob's ladder leading to Heaven. She reminds one of the Venus of Knidos, carved by Praxiteles in the 104th Olympiad. To see her eyes is to be satisfied that her soul is throned in them. . . . Her eyes combine the varying shades of the sixteen varieties of forget-me-not. . . ."

And so forth, and so on.

It is indisputable that in this, her twenty-sixth year, Lola was extremely beautiful. Her bitterest detractors have never denied her the possession of almost magical loveliness. This was informed by sparkling vivacity, and a force

of personality, without which we should never have heard the name of Lola Montez. A human masterpiece of this sort is as much a source of trouble in a community as a priceless diamond. Every one's cupidity is excited, probity and honour melt away in the fierce heat of temptation. The upright think that here at last is a prize worth the sacrifice of all the standards that have hitherto guided them. St Anthony, after forty years of sainthood, succumbs—and is glad that he does. Even miserable Poland for a moment forgot her woes when she looked on Lola; and her stern conqueror, the terrible Paskievich, felt a new spring pervading his grim, sixty-year-old frame. He, the master of many legions, he at whose frown a nation paled—why should he not grasp this treasure? Who should say him nay?

I will let Lola tell the story in her own words.

"While Lola Montez was on a visit to Madame Steinkiller, the wife of the principal banker of Poland, the old viceroy sent to ask her presence at the palace one morning at eleven o'clock. She was assured by several ladies that it would be neither politic nor safe to refuse to go; and she did go in Madame Steinkiller's carriage, and heard from the viceroy a most extraordinary proposition. He offered her the

gift of a splendid country estate, and would load her with diamonds besides. The poor old man was a comic sight to look upon—unusually short in stature, and every time he spoke, he threw back his head and opened his mouth so wide as to expose the artificial gold roof of his palate. A death's-head making love to a lady could not have been a more disgusting or horrible sight. These generous gifts were most respectfully and very decidedly declined. But her refusal to make a bigger fool of one who was already fool enough was not well received.

[This, I take it, is the only instance of the word fool being applied to one of the ablest, if most ruthless, men Russia has ever produced.]

"In those countries where political tyranny is unrestrained, the social and domestic tyranny is scarcely less absolute.

"The next day His Majesty's tool, the colonel of the *gendarmes* and director of the theatre, called at her hotel to urge the suit of his master.

"He began by being persuasive and argumentative, and when that availed nothing, he insinuated threats, when a grand row broke out, and the madcap ordered him out of her room.

"Now when Lola Montez appeared that night at the theatre, she was hissed by two or three parties who had evidently been instructed to do so by the director himself. The same thing occurred the next night; and when it came again on the third night, Lola Montez, in a rage, rushed down to the footlights, and declared that

those hisses had been set at her by the director, because she had refused certain gifts from the old prince, his master. Then came a tremendous shower of applause from the audience; and the old princess, who was present, both nodded her head and clapped her hands to the enraged and fiery Lola.

"Here, then, was a pretty muss. An immense crowd of Poles, who hated both the prince and the director, escorted her to her lodgings. She found herself a heroine without expecting it, and indeed without intending it. In a moment of rage she had told the whole truth, without stopping to count the cost, and she had unintentionally set the whole of Warsaw by the ears.

"The hatred which the Poles intensely felt towards the government and its agents found a convenient opportunity of demonstrating itself, and in less than twenty-four hours Warsaw was bubbling and raging with the signs of an incipient revolution. When Lola Montez was apprised of the fact that her arrest was ordered, she barricaded her door; and when the police arrived she sat behind it with a pistol in her hand, declaring that she would certainly shoot the first man dead who should break in. The police were frightened, or at least they could not agree among themselves who should be the martyr, and they went off to inform their masters what a tigress they had to confront, and to consult as to what should be done. In the meantime, the French Consul gallantly came forward and claimed Lola Montez as a French subject, which

saved her from immediate arrest; but the order was peremptory that she must quit Warsaw."

I have no means of verifying this account. Riots were of frequent occurrence in Warsaw during the 'forties, but, thanks to a rigid censorship of the Press, the particulars concerning them have failed to reach us. That the citizens would at once side with any one who for any reason whatsoever was "again the Government" is not to be doubted, and Lola was quite clever enough to make a slight to her appear as an insult to the Warsaw public. In defending herself with the pistol, she only gave proof of the manlike courage and resolution conspicuous throughout her whole career. As to the cause of the row, one of Lola's recent biographers remarks that if Prince Paskievich had made the offer alleged, it is quite certain that she would have closed with it. It is far from being certain. The Russian Viceroy was definitely repugnant to her, and her subsequent experiences show that she never bestowed herself upon a man whom she could not, or did not, love. She was new, too, to her *rôle* of adventuress. Altogether, there is no good reason for doubting that Lola's relation of her experiences in the Polish capital is substantially true.

On the other hand, vanity certainly betrayed her into several deviations from the truth in her reminiscences of St Petersburg. She went thither, she informs us, upon her expulsion from Poland—an odd refuge! Of her journey in a *calèche* across the wastes of Lithuania and through the dark forests of Muscovy; of St Petersburg, still half an Oriental city, where all men below the rank of nobles wore the long beard and caftan of the Asiatic—our *raconteuse* has nothing to say. She introduces us at once to the Tsar and the innermost arcanum of his Court.

"Nicholas was as amiable and accomplished in private life as he was great, stern, and inflexible as a monarch. He was the strongest pattern of a monarch of this age, and I see no promise of his equal, either in the incumbents or the heirs-apparent of the other thrones of Europe."

Lola, we see, speaks as an authority on crowned heads. In her estimate of Nicholas I. she seems to have forgotten the republican principles she generally professed. The Tsar was, no doubt, the most commanding figure of his time, and Russia's influence in the counsels of Europe has never since had as much weight

as in the earlier part of his reign. His fine proportions, as much as his strength of character, probably excited Lola's admiration, and blinded her to defects, physical and temperamental, which did not escape the notice of more keen-eyed critics. She did not see that the autocrat's majestic demeanour was a pose, that his stern, hawk-like glance was deliberately cultivated, and that he had only three expressions of countenance, all put on at will. Horace Vernet, who knew Nicholas well, was firmly convinced that he was not wholly sane. As to his amiability in private life, he is said to have been, like many tyrants, a good husband, and he often condescended to take tea with his nurse, "a decent Scotch body." It was to this respectable exile that the members of the imperial family owed that fluent and colloquial English, which often as much astonished as gratified our countrymen. It is recorded that one of the Grand Dukes genially accosted the British chaplain at St Petersburg with the enquiry: "God damn your eyes, and how the devil are you?" — language, very properly remarks an Early Victorian writer, which no man on earth had the right to address to a person in Holy Orders.

The Tsar himself was better bred. His

NICHOLAS I.

relations with Mademoiselle Montez were characterised by politeness and liberality. Not only he, but his right-hand man, the astute Livonian, Benkendorf, held the lady's political acumen in high esteem. While she and the Emperor and the Minister of the Interior were in a somewhat private chat about vexatious matters connected with Caucasia, airily relates Lola, a humorous episode occurred.

"It was suddenly announced that the superior officers of the Caucasian army were without, desiring audience. The very subject of the previous conversation rendered it desirable that Lola Montez should not be seen in conference with the Emperor and the Minister of the Interior; so she was thrust into a closet, and the door locked. The conference between the officers and the Emperor was short but stormy. Nicholas got into a towering rage. It seemed to the imprisoned Lola that there was a whirlwind outside; and womanly curiosity to hear what it was about [did she then understand Russian?], joined with the great difficulty of keeping from coughing, made her position a strangely embarrassing one. But the worst of it was, in the midst of this grand quarrel the parties all went out of the room, and forgot Lola Montez, who was locked up in the closet. For a whole hour she was kept in this durance vile, reflecting upon the somewhat confined and cramping honours she was receiving from

Royalty, when the Emperor, who seems to have come to himself before Count Benkendorf did, came running back out of breath, and unlocked the door, and not only begged pardon for his forgetfulness, in a manner which only a man of his accomplished address could do, but presented the victim with a thousand roubles, saying laughingly: 'I have made up my mind whenever I imprison any of my subjects unjustly, I will pay them for their time and suffering.' And Lola Montez answered him: 'Ah, sire, I am afraid that rule will make a poor man of you.' He laughed heartily, and replied: 'Well, I am happy in being able to settle with you, anyhow.'"

Lola makes here a rather heavy draft on the reader's credulity. However, from the nice things she has to say about His Imperial Majesty, it is clear that she had been admitted at one time or another to his presence. Had not Nicholas I. been a pattern of the domestic virtues, we might have attributed his embarrassment at Lola's being discovered in his closet, and the donation of the thousand roubles, to reasons entirely unconnected with the Caucasus. After all, Lola may have argued, if she had been courted by a king, why should she not have been consulted by an emperor?

Before or after her visit to St Petersburg the

dancer saw the Tsar at Berlin. Mounted on a fiery Cordovan barb, she was among the spectators at a review given by King Frederick William in honour of his imperial guest. The horse was scared by the firing, and bolted, carrying its rider straight into the midst of the Royal party. Lola was not sorry to find herself in such company, but a *gendarme* struck at her horse and endeavoured to drive it away. An insult of this sort Lola was the last woman to tolerate. Raising her whip, she slashed the policeman across the face. Out of respect for the Royal party, the incident was allowed to end there, for the moment; but the next day the dancer was waited upon with a summons. She instantly tore the document to pieces, and threw them into the face of the process-server. Such contempt for the law might have been attended with very serious consequences, but Lola went, as a matter of fact, scot-free. Perhaps her friends in high places interceded for her; but it is hard to believe, as she afterwards declared, that the *gendarme* came to her lodgings to sue for her pardon.[1] In every capital of Europe it

[1] De Mirecourt (*Contemporains*) fixes the date of this episode in 1843, and bases it in reports in the *Constitutionnel*, which I have been unable to trace.

soon became known that the beautiful Spanish dancer was able and prepared to defend herself against the most determined antagonists of either sex.

But a nobler quarry than Tsar and Viceroy was now to fall before the shafts from Lola's eyes.

VIII

FRANZ LISZT

VIII

FRANZ LISZT

In the year 1844 Franz Liszt may be considered to have reached the zenith of his fame. In the two-and-twenty years that had elapsed since his first triumph, when a lad of eleven, at Vienna, the young Hungarian had taken pride of place before all the pianists of his day. The crown still rested securely on his brow, despite the formidable rivalry of Thalberg. Paris, London, Berlin, St Petersburg, Rome, and Milan had in turn felt his spell, and rapturously acclaimed him the king of melody. Honours and wealth poured in upon him. The magnates of his native land—the proudest of all aristocracies—presented him with a sword of honour. The monarchs of Europe publicly recognised the lofty genius of one whom they knew to be no friend of theirs. For Liszt, the devotee of later years, glowed then with generous enthusiasm for freedom, political and religious. Frederick

William sent him diamonds, and he pitched them into the wings; the Tsar found him unabashed and contemptuous; the Kings of Bavaria and Hanover he scorned to invite to his concerts; before Isabel II. he refused to play at all, because Spanish Court etiquette forbade his personal introduction to her. The Catholic Church, he wrote, knew only curse and ban. He was the friend of Lamennais. The bourgeois—the Philistine, as we should call him now—he held in greater abhorrence even than the tyrant. In Louis Philippe he saw bourgeosie enthroned. Yet the King of the French courted the man whose empire was more stable than his own. He reminded the pianist of a former meeting when the one was but a boy, and the other only Duke of Orleans. "Much has changed since then," said the Citizen-King. "Yes, sire, but not for the better!" bluntly replied the artist.

In 1844 Europe was more liberal in some respects than America is to-day. Honours and applause were not denied to Liszt because he openly transgressed the sex conventions. Since 1835 his life had been shared by the beautiful Comtesse d'Agoult, the would-be rival, under the name "Daniel Stern," of the more celebrated

Georges Sand. Of this union were born three children, one of whom became the wife of Richard Wagner. Madame d'Agoult was a Romanticist, and a very typical figure of her time and circle. She was an interesting woman, and tried hard to be more interesting still. But it was no affectation of passion that led her to abandon home, husband, and position, to throw herself into the pianist's arms at Basle. She was deeply in love with him; but she wished to be more than a wife, more than a lover: she aspired to be his muse. Liszt, however, needed no inspiration from without. In an oft-quoted phrase, he said that the Dantes created the Beatrices; "the genuine die when they are eighteen years old." The man chafed more and more under the ties that bound him. He had no wish to abandon the mother of his children, but his genius demanded to be unfettered. He wandered over Europe, sad and bitter at heart, but heaping up his laurels. The Comtesse and the children stayed in Paris, or at the villa Liszt had rented on the beautiful islet of Nonnenwerth, in the shadow of "the castled crag of Drachenfels." There he joined them from time to time, while unable to resist the conclusion that he and she must part. The

evolution of their temperaments and intellects was in rapidly diverging directions. He was no longer willing to throw himself out of the window at her bidding as he had publicly declared himself to be four years before. The cord that bound them was frayed and fretted to a thread.

At Dresden fate threw Liszt and Lola Montez across each other's path. The intense, artistic nature of the man cried out with joy at the glorious beauty of the woman. Her inextinguishable vivacity, her almost masculine boldness, her frank and splendid animalism enraptured the musician, now sick to death of soulful conversations and the sentimentalities of Romanticism. It was the old struggle for the possession of the artist, waged by Silvia and Gioconda. Lola was beautiful as a tigress. To Liszt she could surrender herself proudly. She was one of those erotic women, whose passion is excited rather by a man's mental attributes than by his physical advantages. Intellect she adored. Her own strong nature could yield only to a stronger. We have heard how she spoke of Nicholas I.; we shall find this almost sensuous craving for force of personality in her subsequent relations. To her, the pianist must have been a new revelation of manhood. Her

FRANZ LISZT.

life so far had brought her in contact with Indian officers and civilians, a few men about town, and (for a few hours) with one or more potentates. Now she met a great man with a beautiful soul. She had heard the stories current of Liszt's abnegation, his boundless generosity, his pride in his vocation. In her, too, he recognised a haughty intolerance of patronage, a contempt for those in high places, such as he had himself exhibited. Both could laugh over the slights to which they had subjected the King of Prussia, and their demeanour in presence of the mighty Tsar. It is likely enough that their conversation may have begun in some such fashion; how their love ripened we are left to guess. On this episode in her history Lola exhibits unwonted reserve. She mentions meeting Liszt at Dresden, and speaks of the furore he created. As to their love passages, she is silent. I like to think that this was a secret she held sacred, that her love for the great musician had in it something fresh and noble, which distinguished it from the emotions excited in her by all other men. Women of many attachments are prone to idealise one among them.

The world was bound by no such scruples.

The rumour ran from capital to capital that Liszt was enthralled by the Andalusian. It reached the Comtesse d'Agoult in her retreat at Nonnenwerth. She penned a fierce, reproachful letter. Liszt, in Calypso's grotto at Dresden, answered proudly and coldly. The Comtesse wrote, announcing the end of their relations. Most men are frightened at the abrupt termination of a love affair of which they have long been heartily weary. Liszt gave the Comtesse time to think it over. She made no further overtures, expecting that he would come to kneel at her feet. He did not. The lady went to Paris, and they never met again.

The artist at least owed Lola a service, since she had been the unwitting instrument of a rupture so long desired by him. But he valued his newly-recovered freedom too highly to jeopardise it by linking his life again with a woman's. His love affair with Lola may have been simply an infatuation. Lucio would soon have tired of Gioconda had he lived with her. We hardly know how this brief love story began; we are quite in the dark as to how it ended. A report was current that the two travelled together from Dresden to Paris, where both appeared in the spring of '44. We do not hear

that they were seen together in the French capital, so the adieux may already have been exchanged. Liszt stayed there but a few weeks, and then started on a tour through the French departments. Then he crossed the Pyrenees, and pushed as far south as Gibraltar. Less than three years later he was in the toils of a third woman—the Princess Zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, with whom his relations endured twelve years. It is noteworthy that he and Lola turned their thoughts from love to religion almost at the same time, though half a world lay between them.

Of the third actor in this little drama it is hardly within my province to speak. The Comtesse d'Agoult found consolation in the care of her children and in those wider interests of which she never tired. She ardently espoused the cause of the Revolution in 1848. More fortunate than her old lover, she never lost the sane and generous sympathies of her youth. You may read her *Souvenirs*, published at Paris the year after her death (1877). Liszt long survived the women who had loved him—not a fate that either of them would have envied him.

IX

AT THE BANQUET OF THE IMMORTALS

IX

AT THE BANQUET OF THE IMMORTALS

Lola's first appearance in Paris was, like her *début* at Her Majesty's, a fiasco. Thanks, no doubt, to her reputation for beauty and audacity, she secured an engagement at the Opera, then under the management of Léon Pillet. The power behind the throne was the great Madame Stoltz, who some years later was to be hooted off the stage by a hostile clique just as Lola had been nine months before. At that time, however, no one dreamed of a revolt against the all-powerful *cantatrice*, whose favour the *danseuse* was fortunate to procure. The great Stoltz looked best and was luckiest in men's parts, and therefore saw no rival in the now famous "Andalouse."

Lola, accordingly, made her bow to the Parisian public on Saturday, 30th March 1844, in *Il Lazzarone*, an opera in two acts by Halévy. Her audience was more fastidious than the play-

goers of Dresden and Warsaw. Her beauty ravished them, but in her dancing they saw little merit. Seeing this, Lola made a characteristic bid for their favour. Her satin shoe had slipped off. Seizing it, she threw it with one of her superb gestures into the boxes, where it was pounced upon and brandished as a precious relic by a gentleman of fashion. The manœuvre seems to have succeeded in its object, for the *Constitutionnel* next morning found it necessary to warn young dancers against the danger of factitious applause, while "abstaining from criticising too severely a pretty woman who had not had time to study Parisian tastes." Théophile Gautier was less gallant:—

"We are reluctant," he writes, "to speak of Lola Montes, who reminds us by her Christian name of one of the prettiest women of Granada, and by her surname of the man who excited in us the most powerful dramatic emotions we have ever experienced—Montes, the most illustrious *espada* of Spain. The only thing Andalusian about Mlle. Lola Montes is a pair of magnificent black eyes. She gabbles Spanish very indifferently, French hardly at all, and English passably (*sic*). Which is her country? That is the question. We may say that Mlle. Lola has a little foot and pretty legs. Her use of these is another matter. The curiosity excited by her

adventures with the northern police, and her conversations, *à coups de cravache*, with the Prussian *gens d'armes*, has not been satisfied, it must be admitted. Mlle. Lola Montes is certainly inferior to Dolores Serrai, who has, at least, the advantage of being a real Spaniard, and redeems her imperfections as a dancer by a voluptuous *abandon*, and an admirable fire and precision of rhythm. We suspect, after the recital of her equestrian exploits, that Mlle. Lola is more at home in the saddle than on the boards."

As at Her Majesty's, so at the Opera. Lola's first appearance was her last. For the rest of the year, as far as I can learn, she was out of an engagement. She had, no doubt, made some money during her German and Russian tour, and Liszt would not have forgotten her when he started on his southern tour at the end of April.

If her association with him had begotten in Lola Montez a thirst for wit and genius, she had every chance of slaking it in Paris. There were giants on the earth in those days, and they were all gathered together on the banks of the Seine. It is not too much to say that since the Medici ruled in Florence, no capital has boasted so brilliant an assemblage of men of genius as did Paris under the paternal government of July.

In the year '44, Victor Hugo, attended by a score of minor poets, daily appeared on his balcony to acknowledge the homage of the public; Lamartine was dividing his attention between politics and literature. Alfred de Musset was wrecking his constitution by spasms of debauchery. Balzac was dodging his creditors, playing truant from the National Guard, and finding time to write his "Comédie Humaine"; Théophile Gautier, a man of thirty-three, if he had not yet received the full meed of his genius, was already well known and widely appreciated. Alexandre Dumas had long since become a national institution, and his son was looking out for copy among the ladies of the *demi-monde.* Delphine Gay was writing her brilliant "Lettres Parisiennes" for her husband's newspaper. The Salon was still rejecting the masterpieces of Delacroix, but Vernet was painting the ceiling of the Palais Bourbon. Auber, though past the prime of life, had not yet scored his greatest success. Paris was like Athens in the age of Pericles.

Life was really worth living then, when Louis Philippe was king. He was an honest, kindly-natured man, this pear-headed potentate, who reigned, "comme la corniche règne autour d'un

plafond." He was the king of the *bourgeois*, and he looked it every inch, with his white felt hat and respectable umbrella; but in the calm sunshine of his reign the arts flourished and the world was gay. Those days before the Revolution remind us of that strange picture in our National Gallery, "The Eve of the Deluge." Paris, as the old stagers regretfully assure us, was Paris then, and not the caravanserai of all the nations of the world. The good Americans who died then, had they gone to Paris, would have thought they had reached the wrong destination. Men of Pontus and Asia had not then made the French capital their own. The invasion of the Barbarians, says Gustave Claudin, took place in 1848. They came, not conducted by Attila, but by the newly-constructed railways. As these strangers had plenty of money to spend, they naturally sought the most fashionable quarters.

"The true Parisians disappeared in the crowd, and knew not where to find themselves. In the evening, the restaurants where they used to dine, the stalls and boxes where they used to assist at the opera and the play, were taken by assault by cohorts of sight-seers wishing to steep themselves up to the neck in *la vie Parisienne*."

The tide of the invasion has never diminished

in volume, and the true Parisian has become extinct.

In the year 1844 the fine flower of Parisian society was in undisputed possession of the Boulevard—the quarter between the Opera and the Rue Drouot.

"By virtue of a selection which no one contested," says the author just quoted, "nobody was tolerated there who could not lay claim to some sort of distinction or originality. There seemed to exist a kind of invisible moral barrier, closing this area against the mediocre, the insipid, and the insignificant, who passed by, but did not linger, knowing that their place was not there."

The headquarters of the noble company of the Boulevard was the famous Café de Paris, at the corner of the Rue Taitbout. Dumas, Balzac, and Alfred de Musset were to be seen there twice or thrice a week; the eccentric Lord Seymour, founder of the French Jockey Club, had his own table there. Lola, doubtless, often tasted the unsurpassed *cuisine* of this celebrated restaurant, for she soon penetrated into the circle of the Olympians, and was presented with the freedom of the Boulevard.

She met Claudin (who indeed knew everybody).

"Lola Montez," he says, "was an enchantress.

There was about her something provoking and voluptuous which drew you. Her skin was white, her wavy hair like the tendrils of the woodbine, her eyes tameless and wild, her mouth like a budding pomegranate. Add to that a dashing figure, charming feet, and perfect grace. Unluckily," the notice concludes, "as a dancer she had no talent."

That multiple personality whom Vandam embodies in "An Englishman in Paris" admits that Lola was naturally graceful, that her gait and carriage were those of a duchess. When he goes on to say that her wit was that of a pot-house, I seem to detect one of his not infrequent lapses from the truth. Only three years had elapsed since Lola had shone in Court circles in India, where the social atmosphere was not that of a bar-room; and since then she had been wandering about in countries where her ignorance of the language must have left her manner of speech and modes of thought almost unaffected. Pot-house wit would not have fascinated Liszt, nor the fastidious Louis of Bavaria. "Men of far higher intellectual attainments than mine, and familiar with very good society," admits our nebulous chronicler,[1] "raved and kept raving about her."

[1] All the statements made concerning Lola in "An Englishman in

Dumas, he says in another place, was as much smitten with her as her other admirers. This, of course, is no guarantee of her refinement, for the genial Creole had the reputation of not being over nice in his attachments and amours. He was then in the prime of life, and may be considered to have just reached the zenith of his fame by the publication of "Les Trois Mousquetaires," "Monte Cristo," and "La Reine Margot" (1844-45). Two years before he had formally and legally married Mademoiselle Ida Ferrier—this step, so inconsistent with his temperament and mode of life, having resulted from his own reckless disregard of the conventions. The lady had fascinated him while she was interpreting a *rôle* of his creation at the Porte-St-Martin. It did not strike him that it would be irregular to take her with him to a ball given by his patron, the Duke of Orleans, and he straightway did so. "Of course, my dear Dumas," said His Highness affably, "it is only your *wife* that you would think of presenting to me." Poor Alexandre, the lover of all women and none in particular, was hoisted with his own petard. A prince's hints, above all when he is your patron

Paris" must be received with caution, as they can only be taken at the best as hearsay evidence transcribed by Vandam.

and publisher, are commands. Dumas was led to the altar, like a sheep to the slaughter, by the charming Ida. Chateaubriand supported the bridegroom through the ordeal. However, the chains of matrimony sat lightly on the irrepressible *romancier*. Madame Dumas soon after departed for Florence, greatly to the relief of her spouse. He was living, at the time of Lola's visit to Paris, at the Villa Médicis at St Germain. There he could superintend the building of his palace of Monte Cristo, on the road to Marly, a part of which, with imperturbable *sang-froid*, he actually raised on the land belonging to a neighbour, without so much as a "by your leave." This ambitious residence emptied Dumas pockets of the little money that the ladies he loved had left in them.

Alexandre, of course, fell passionately in love with Lola Montez. We need no written assurance of that. We read that he told her that she had acted "like a gentleman" in her treatment of Frederick William's policemen, and with what far-fetched compliments he followed up this commendation it is easy to imagine. There were certain resemblances in their temperaments, though the woman was far the stronger. Posterity is never likely to agree on an estimate

of Dumas's character. Théodore de Banville thought him a truly great man.

"Dumas," he wrote, "had no more need to husband his strength and his vitality than a river has to economise with its waters, and it seemed, in fact, that he held in his strong hands inexhaustible urns, whence flowed a stream always clear and limpid. In what formidable metal had he been cast? Once he took it into his head to take his son, Alexandre, to the masked ball of Grados, at the Barrière Montparnasse, and, attired as a postilion, the great man danced all night without resting for a moment, and held women with his outstretched arm, like a Hercules. When he returned home in the morning, he found that his postilion's breeches had, through the swelling of the muscles, become impossible to remove; so Alexandre was obliged to cut them into strips with a penknife. After that what did the historian of the Mousquetaires do? Do you think he chose his good clean sheets or a warm bath? He chose work! And having taken some *bouillon*, set himself down before his writing-paper, which he continued to fill with adventures till the evening, with as much 'go' and spirit as if he had come from calm repose.

"Nature has given up making that kind of man; by way of a change, she turns out poets, who, having composed a single sonnet, pass the rest of their lives contemplating themselves and —their sonnets."

ALEXANDRE DUMAS, SENIOR.

Prodigious! It is gratifying to think that this indefatigable worker had always two sincere admirers—himself and his son. The latter, it is true, would have his joke at the former's expense. "My father," remarked the son, "is so vain that he would be ready to hang on to the back of his own carriage, to make people believe he kept a black servant." Notwithstanding, the two loved each other tenderly. Innumerable anecdotes bear witness to the paternal fondness of the one, the filial devotion of the other. Yet their relation was more that of two sworn friends, as is so touchingly expressed in these lines from the "Père Prodigue":—

". . . I have sought your affection, more than your obedience and respect. . . . To have all in common, heart as well as purse, to give and to tell each other everything, such has been our device. We have lost, it seems, several hundred thousands of francs; but this we have gained—the power of counting always on one another, thou on me, I on thee, and of being ready always to die for each other. That is the most important thing between father and son."

These are the words of Frenchmen. An Englishman would have put such language into the mouths of husband and wife.

Enjoying the friendship of Dumas *père*, Lola

no doubt had the privilege of meeting Alexandre junior. The young man was then in his twenty-first year, and had piled up debts to the respectable total of fifty thousand francs. It was just about this time, as has been said, that he turned his attention to literature. He found "copy" for his most celebrated work in the pale, flower-like courtesan, Alphonsine Plessis, who shared with Lola the devotion of the erotic Boulevard. The two were women of very different stamp. The Irish woman confronted the world with head erect and flashing eyes; the Lady of the Camellias, with a blush and trembling lips. They were typical of two great classes of women: those who rule men, and those whom men rule. The loved of the God of Love died young. After Alphonsine's early death, the fair Parisiennes flocked to her apartments, as to the shrine of some patron saint, and touched, as though they were precious relics, her jewellery and trinkets, her *lingerie*, and her slippers.

X

MÉRY

X

MÉRY

ANOTHER most delightful friend had Lola—he whom she refers to in her autobiography as "the celebrated poet, Méry." To describe this charming and impossible personage as a poet, is to indicate only one department of his genius: as a dramatist he was not far inferior to his great contemporaries, as a novelist he revealed an amazing power of paradox, and a bewildering fertility of imagination. He wrote descriptions of countries he had never seen (though he had travelled far), which, by their accuracy and colour, deceived and delighted the very natives. He was not merely rich in rhymes, said Dumas, he was a millionaire. He could write, too, in more serious vein, and was a profound and ardent classicist.

In 1845 Méry was approaching his half-century. Thirty years before he had come to Paris from Marseilles in hot pursuit of a pamphleteer who had dared to attack him.

He found time to cross swords with somebody else, and got the worst of the encounter. As a result he took a voyage to Italy for the benefit of his health. His adventures remind us alternatively of those of Brantôme and Benvenuto Cellini. At a later period he was associated with Barthélemy in an intrigue for the restoration of the Bonapartes; and went to pay his respects to Queen Hortense, while his colleague vainly endeavoured to talk with the Eaglet through the gilded bars of his cage.

Méry could, in short, do everything, and everything very well. He possessed the faculty of turning base metal into gold. Geese in his eyes became swans, and in every lump of literary coke he saw a diamond of the purest ray. It was, above all, in his dramatic criticism, remarks De Banville, that this faculty produced the most surprising results.

"One day, reading in Méry's review the pretended recital of a comedy of which I was the author, I could not but admire its gaiety, grace, unexpected turns, and happy confusion, and I said to myself: 'Ah, if only this comedy were really the one I wrote!'"

On another occasion, says the poet, at the theatre,

"he said to me: 'What a superb drama!' —and he was perfectly right. The play, as he described it to me, was, in fact, superb, only unfortunately it had been entirely reconstructed by Méry on the absurd foundation imagined by Mr * * * *. The *dénouement* he invented—for though the third act was not finished, he spoke of the fifth as an old acquaintance—was of such tragic power and daring originality, that after hearing him expound it, I had no desire to witness Mr * * * 's."

Reviewers and dramatic critics of this kind are now, unhappily, rare.

These few anecdotes sufficiently justify De Banville's claim that Méry was something altogether unheard of and fabulously original. He should have been (and probably was) the happiest of men, and his peculiar powers must have lightened his critical labours as much as they benefited those he criticised. He was as incapable of envy as Dumas was of rancour. Certainly no more lovable and agreeable creature ever haunted the slopes of Parnassus.

I doubt if such men would be appreciated in our society. Ours is the reign of the glum Bœotian. We know not how to converse, and wits are as dead as kings' jesters. There is no scholarship in our senate, and the standard of oratory there would not have satisfied an Early

Victorian debating society. If we talk less, assuredly we do not think the more. Every social, political, and religious idea that occupies our dull brains had entered into the consciousness of the men of the 'forties. They thought quickly and talked brilliantly. Their young men were youths — full of fire, enthusiasm, love, and fun. They did not talk about the advantages of devotion to business in early life. They were not born tired. Wonderful, too, as it may seem, people in those days used to like to meet each other in social converse, and were not ashamed to admit it. It was not then fashionable to affect a disinclination for society —the handiest excuse for an inability to talk and to think. Lola Montez learned in Paris what was meant by the *joie de vivre.* In '45. wit was at the prow and pleasure at the helm.

XI

DUJARIER

XI

DUJARIER

As an *artiste*, Lola was naturally anxious to conciliate the Press, which had not spoken too kindly of her first performance on the Paris stage. Gautier's unflattering notice had appeared in one of the most influential newspapers—*La Presse*. This journal was under the direction of the famous De Girardin, the Harmsworth of his generation. Till 1st July 1836 the lowest annual subscription to any newspaper in Paris was eighty francs; on that day De Girardin issued the first number of *La Presse* at a subscription of forty francs a year. This startling reduction in the price of news excited, of course, no little animosity, but its successful results were immediately manifest. The daring journalist's next innovation was the creation of the *feuilleton*. The new paper prospered exceedingly, though it represented the views of the editor rather than those of any large section of the public. In 1840 De Girardin acquired a half of the property,

the other being held by Monsieur Dujarier, who assumed the functions of literary editor.

In 1845 Dujarier was a young man of twenty-nine, a writer of no mean ability, and a smart journalist. He was well known to all the Olympians of the Boulevard, and entered with zest into the gay life of Paris. Lola became acquainted with him soon after her arrival in the capital, probably in an effort to win the paper over to her side. He spent, she tells us, almost every hour he could spare from his editorial duties with her, and in his society she rapidly ripened in a knowledge of politics. But before her political education had proceeded far, the woman's beauty and the man's wit had produced the effect that might have been looked for. "They read no more that day"—Lola and Dujarier loved each other.

"This," continues our heroine, "was in autumn [the autumn of '44], and the following spring the marriage was to take place." I fancy the word "marriage" is introduced here out of respect for the susceptibilities of the American public. The Old Guard of the Boulevard, in Louis Philippe's golden reign, *se fiança mais ne se maria pas.* Besides, Lola was still legally the wife of that remote and forgotten officer, Captain James. "It was arranged that Alexandre Dumas,

and the celebrated poet, Méry, should accompany them on their marriage tour through Spain." Dumas, Méry, and Lola, to say nothing of Dujarier, travelling together through Andalusia —here would have been a gallant company indeed, with which one would have gladly made a voyage even to Tartarus and back! The narrative, too, of the journey would have permanently enriched literature. But the scheme has gone, these sixty years, to the cloudy netherworld of glorious dreams unrealized.

The success of De Girardin's newspaper had intensely embittered his competitors, who made it the object of venomous attacks. The founder dipped his pen in gall and acid, and his sword in the blood of his enemies. He fought four duels, and having killed Armand Carrel, sheathed his rapier. But he did not lay aside his pen, which was even more dreaded. Dujarier proved an apt pupil, and by his command of irony and sarcasm at last attracted to himself as much hatred and jealousy as his senior. The special rival of his paper was the *Globe*, edited by Monsieur Granier de Cassagnac, a journalist of the type we now denominate yellow. He had at one time been on the staff of *La Presse*, to which he remained financially indebted. Dujarier came

across the debit notes signed by him, and obtained a judgment against him. The exasperation of the *Globe* knew no bounds. The editor may be conceived addressing to his satellites the reproaches used by Henry II.: "Of those that eat my bread, is there none that will rid me of this pestilent journalist?" The appeal was responded to by his wife's brother, Monsieur Jean Baptiste Rosemond de Beauvallon, a Creole from Guadeloupe, then in his twenty-fifth year. He was dramatic critic to the *Globe*, and in this capacity his acquaintance was sought by Lola. Dujarier naturally objected to this, and his interference was not forgiven by his journalist rival. The two men seemed doomed to cross each other's path. There was a certain Madame Albert, with whom Dujarier had been on terms of intimacy for some years. In December 1844 he ceased to visit her, probably for no other reason than that he had transferred his affections to Lola. As it happened, however, De Beauvallon made the lady's acquaintance at this moment, and she spitefully suggested that Dujarier had discontinued relations with her in order not to meet him. The Creole's score against the literary editor of *La Presse* was now a high one, and he embraced his brother-in-law's quarrel with enthusiasm.

XII

THE SUPPER AT THE FRÈRES PROVENÇAUX

XII

THE SUPPER AT THE FRÈRES PROVENÇAUX

At the beginning of March (1845), Lola, despite her failure at the Opera, obtained an engagement at the Porte-St-Martin Theatre for the musical comedy *La Biche au Bois*. While she was rehearsing, she and her lover received an invitation to supper at the Frères Provençaux, a fashionable restaurant in the Palais Royal. The party was to be composed of some of the liveliest men and women in Paris, and none of those invited were over thirty-five years of age. Lola was keen to accept, but Dujarier would not hear of her being seen in such company. In spite of her protests he decided, however, to go himself. It was the evening of 11th March.

He found himself the only guest, for all the others paid their shares in the cost of the entertainment. The nominal hostess was Mademoiselle Liévenne: "a splendid person, with abundant

black hair, black eyes like a Moorish woman or Arlésienne, dazzling skin, and opulent figure." There were also at the table Mademoiselle Atila Beauchêne, Mademoiselle Alice Ozy, Mademoiselle Virginie Capon, and other charming ladies, all styling themselves actresses, and spending a thousand francs a week out of a salary of twenty-five. In attendance on this bevy of beauty were some of the jolliest fellows in Paris. The oldest and most distinguished was Roger de Beauvoir, whose curly black hair, wonderful waistcoats, and pearl-grey pantaloons made him the delight of the fair sex, and the envy of his fellow-boulevardiers. De Beauvallon was also present, but he and Dujarier were not openly on bad terms, and nothing seemed likely to cloud the general gaiety.

The fun waxed fast and furious. Champagne corks popped in all directions, toasts were drunk to everybody and everything. Dujarier proposed "Monsieur de Beauvoir's waistcoat," followed by "Monsieur de Beauvoir's raven locks." The jovial Roger responded with the toast "Friend Dujarier's bald head," and evoked roars of laughter by drinking to the Memoirs of Count Montholon, with which *La Presse* had promised to entertain its readers for the last five years.

Dujarier laughed as loudly as the others; the champagne had risen to his head. He began to fondle the girls, and became a little too bold even for their taste. "Anaïs," he murmured in an audible whisper to Mademoiselle Liévenne, "je coucherai avec toi en six mois." The next moment he realised he had gone too far. Recollecting himself, he apologised, was forgiven, and the incident seemed to be forgotten by all.

The remains of the supper were removed, curtains drawn back, and one side of the room left free for dancing, while a card-table occupied the other. More people dropped in. De Beauvoir, finding the literary editor in such a good humour, thought the moment opportune to remind him of one of his romances which *La Presse* had accepted but seemed in no hurry to publish. To worry an editor about such a matter at such a moment is to court a rebuff. Dujarier replied sharply that Dumas's novel would be running for some time, adding that it was likely to prove more profitable to the paper than De Beauvoir's serial would be. Roger, the best-humoured of men, was nettled at this reply, and said so. "Good! do you seek an affair with me?" retorted the editor. "No,

I don't look for affairs, but I sometimes find them," answered the author.

It is clear that Dujarier, like his mistress, seldom had his temper under perfect control. He took a hand at *lansquenet*, and complained of the low limit imposed by the banker, Monsieur de St Aignan. He and De Beauvallon offered to share the bank's risks and winnings. This being agreed to, Dujarier threw down twenty-five louis, De Beauvallon five and a half. The bank won twice, and Dujarier was entitled to a hundred louis. But St Aignan had made the mistake of understating the amount in the bank before the cards were dealt, and now, therefore, found that the winnings were not sufficient to satisfy him and his partners. He was about to make good the deficit at his own expense, when De Beauvallon generously suggested to Dujarier that they should share the loss in proportion to their stakes. The literary editor preferred to stand upon his rights, and seems to have been backed up by the bystanders. De Beauvallon said nothing more at the time, but as the candles were flickering low and the party was preparing to break up, he reminded his rival that he owed him (on some other score)

eighty-four louis. Dujarier replied tartly, but handed him the seventy-five louis he had won, borrowed the odd nine louis from Collot, the restaurant-keeper, and thus discharged the debt. He had lost on the whole evening two thousand five hundred francs. In the grey March dawn his head became clearer. He vaguely realised he had given deep offence to two, at least, of his fellow-revellers. He returned, anxious and haggard, to his lodgings in the Rue Laffitte, where Lola was eagerly awaiting him. She guessed at once that something was amiss, and endeavoured in vain to extract from him the cause of his evident agitation. Returning evasive answers, the journalist hurried off to the office of *La Presse*.

XIII

THE CHALLENGE

XIII

THE CHALLENGE

Whether or not Dujarier had used offensive expressions to De Beauvallon on this particular occasion, the opportunity for bringing to a head the long-standing feud between the two newspapers was too good to be missed.

That afternoon the literary editor was waited upon at his office by two gentlemen — the Vicomte d'Ecquevillez, a French officer in the Spanish service, and the Comte de Flers. They informed him that they came upon behalf of Monsieur de Beauvallon, who considered himself insulted by the tone of his remarks the previous evening, and required an apology or satisfaction. Dujarier affected contempt for his rival, making a point of mispronouncing his name. He had no apology to offer, and referred his visitors to Monsieur Arthur Bertrand, and Monsieur de Boigne. As the seconds withdrew D'Ecquevillez mentioned that Monsieur

de Beauvoir also considered himself entitled to satisfaction.

The rest of that day Lola could not but remark the intense pre-occupation of her lover —that concentration of mind that all men experience at the near menace of death. On the battle-field it may last for a minute or an hour; in other circumstances it may last for days together. Dujarier felt himself already a dead man. He had hardly handled a pistol in his life. He envied his mistress, who had often given him an exhibition of her powers as a shot. De Beauvallon, on the other hand, was known to be skilled in all the arts of attack and defence. Nor could Dujarier doubt that he wished to see him dead. In the evening Bertrand and De Boigne arrived. Lola was with difficulty persuaded to leave them to attend her rehearsal. Dujarier, pale and nervous, discussed the matter with his friends. "C'est une querelle de boutique!" he exclaimed bitterly, but expressed his determination to proceed with the affair if it cost him his life. Bertrand, fully alive to the gravity of the situation, sought De Beauvallon's seconds, and argued that nothing said by his principal could be considered ground for an encounter. His efforts at a reconciliation

were useless. De Boigne tried to give precedence to De Beauvoir, who was accounted an indifferent shot; but that easily placable author had just lost his mother, and displayed no anxiety to defraud De Beauvallon of his vengeance. Seeing the encounter was inevitable, Bertrand and De Boigne exacted from the other side this written statement:—

"We, the undersigned, declare that in consequence of a disagreement, Monsieur Dujarier has been challenged by Monsieur de Beauvallon in terms which render it impossible for him to decline the encounter. We have done everything possible to conciliate these gentlemen, and it is only upon Monsieur de Beauvallon insisting that we have consented to assist them."

This statement was signed by all four seconds. It left Dujarier, as the injured party, the choice of arms. He chose the pistol, thinking, it is to be presumed, that as his adversary was equally experienced in the use of the rapier and fire-arms, chance might possibly favour him with the latter.

Lola, while these negotiations were proceeding, was a prey to the most painful apprehensions. Pressed by her, Dujarier admitted that he was about to engage in an affair of honour, but gave

her to understand that his opponent would be Roger de Beauvoir. Her alarm at once subsided. No one feared Roger. "You know I am a woman of courage," she said; "if the duel is just, I will not prevent it."

"Oh, what after all is a duel!" said her lover lightly, but she noticed that his smile was forced.

She drove to the Porte-St-Martin; Dujarier, at three in the afternoon, paid a visit to Alexandre Dumas. He picked up a sword that stood in a corner of the room, and made a few passes. "You don't know how to wield the sword, I can see," observed the novelist. "Can you use any other weapon better?"

"Well, I *must* use the pistol," replied the journalist significantly.

"You mean you are going to fight?"

"Yes, to-morrow, with De Beauvallon."

Dumas looked grave. "Your adversary is a very good swordsman," he said. "You had better choose swords. When De Beauvallon sees how you handle the weapon, the duel will be at an end."

He told Dujarier that Alexandre, junior, practised at the same fencing-class as De Beauvallon, and he strongly urged him to reconsider the choice of weapons. But the journalist

was obstinate. He had no confidence in his opponent's clemency, and he feared his skill with the rapier. With the pistol there was always a chance; with cold steel he was bound to be killed. In vain Dumas argued that the sword could spare, while the pistol could slay, even if the trigger were pulled by the least experienced hand. Dujarier dined with father and son. The friends parted at nine in the evening. The journalist, in company with Bertrand, went to a shooting gallery, where he tried his hand at the pistol. He hit a figure as large as a man only twice in twenty shots! Dumas strolled into the Variétés. He was ill at ease. Finally he took a cab and drove to the Rue Laffitte. He found Dujarier seated at his bureau, writing his will, as it afterwards proved.

Dumas returned to the question of weapons. Dujarier showed a disposition to avoid the whole subject. "You are only losing your time," he said, "and that is valuable. I don't want you to arrange this affair, mind. It is my first duel. It is astonishing that I have not had one before. It's a sort of baptism that I must undergo."

His friend questioned him as to the cause of the proposed encounter. "Lord knows!" was the reply, "I can recollect no particular reason.

I don't know what I am fighting about. It's a duel between the *Globe* and *La Presse*," he added, "not between Monsieur Dujarier and Monsieur de Beauvallon."

Seeing him determined both to fight and to choose fire-arms, Dumas recommended him at least not to use the hair-trigger pistol. To the novelist's astonishment, Dujarier admitted he did not know the difference between one kind of pistol and another. Alexandre said he would show him, and drove off to his house for the purpose. As he descended the stairs, he passed Lola, who noticed his agitation. Dujarier was again writing when she entered his room. He was very pale. Dissimulating his preoccupation, he invited his mistress to read a flattering notice on her performance from the pen of Monsieur de Boigne. But Lola was not to be thus diverted from her purpose. She implored her lover to tell her more about the proposed encounter, to reveal the cause of his evident anxiety. He merely replied that he was extremely busy, that there was nothing to worry about. He insisted on her returning to her own apartments. "I'll come and see you to-morrow," he promised, "and, Lola!—if—if I should leave Paris for any reason, I don't want you to lose sight of

my friends. Promise that. They are good sorts."

He almost forced Lola out of the house, only to admit Dumas a few minutes later. The novelist had brought a brand-new pair of pistols. "Use these," he said; "I'll give you a written statement that they have not been used before. That ought to satisfy the seconds." Dujarier shook his head. "Look here," said Dumas solemnly, "your luck has endured a long time. Take care that it does not fail you now."

His friend's well-meant pertinacity irritated the journalist. He replied brusquely: "What would you? Do you want me to pass for a coward? If I don't accept this challenge, I shall have others. De Beauvallon is determined to fasten a quarrel on me. One of his seconds told me so. He said my face displeased him. However, this affair over, I shall be left in peace."

It was one o'clock in the morning. Dumas, having exhausted all the resources of argument and persuasion, rose to depart. "At least," he counselled his friend, "don't fight till two in the afternoon. It is no use getting up early for so unpleasant an affair. Besides, I know you. You are always at your worst — nervous and fidgety—between ten and eleven."

"You know that," said Dujarier eagerly, "you won't think it fear? And, Dumas," . . . he went to his desk, and wrote a cheque on Laffitte's for a thousand crowns. "I owe you this. Now this is drawn on my private account, and as the duel takes place at eleven, go there before eleven, for you don't know what may happen. Go there *before eleven*, for after that my credit may be dead. I beg of you, go before eleven."

The two friends wrung each other's hand, and Dumas, heavy at heart, went downstairs. Dujarier was left to his thoughts. The reflections of a man who is practically sure that he will be dead next day are quite peculiar. The sensation is not fear in the ordinary acceptation of the term. It is an effort to realise what no man ever can properly realise—that the world around you, which in one (and a very true) sense has no existence except as it is perceived by you, will, notwithstanding, be existing to-morrow evening, while you will not exist. Intellectually you know this, but you cannot realise it.

At such moments men turn with relief to the pen. With ink and paper you can project yourself beyond your own grave. Dujarier signed his will, which began with these words:—

"On the eve of fighting for the most absurd reasons, on the most frivolous of pretexts, and without its being possible for my friends, Arthur Bertrand and Charles de Boigne, to avoid an encounter, which was provoked in terms that forced me on my honour to accept, I set forth hereafter my last wishes . . ."

Then he wrote to his mother.

"My Good Mother,—If this letter reaches you, it will be because I am dead or dangerously wounded. I shall exchange shots to-morrow with pistols. It is a necessity of my position, and I accept it as a man of courage. If anything could have induced me to decline the challenge, it would have been the grief which the blow would cause you, were I struck. But the law of honour is imperative, and if you must weep, dear mother, I would rather it be for a son worthy of you than for a coward. Let this thought assuage your grief: my last thought will have been of you. I shall go to the encounter to-morrow calm and sure of myself. Right is on my side. I embrace you, dear mother, with all the warmth of my heart.

"Dujarier."

There was nothing more to be done or to be said. Only a few hours of the night remained. The experienced duellist would have steadied his nerves by as long a sleep as possible. But Dujarier regarded himself as doomed. He

mentally contrasted his miserable performances at the shooting gallery with the wonderful things De Beauvallon was reported to have done with the pistol in Cuba. The stories might be inventions. He tried to snatch a few hours' sleep.[1]

[1] The foregoing section may seem more in the style of a novel than a biography, but, the dialogue not excepted, it is an exact *résumé* of the evidence given at the subsequent trial.

XIV

THE DUEL

XIV

THE DUEL

THE morning of the 11th March dawned. The ground was white with snow. Dujarier was taking his light French breakfast when Lola's maid brought him a message. She wished to see him. He promised to come at once, and the servant took her leave. Dujarier hastily scribbled these lines:—

"MY DEAR LOLA,—I am going out to fight a duel with pistols. This will explain why I wished to pass the night alone, and why I have not gone to see you this morning. I need all the composure at my command, and you would have excited in me too much emotion. I will be with you at two o'clock, unless—— Good-bye, my dear little Lola, the dear little girl I love. D."

It was seven o'clock. He told his servant to deliver the letter about nine. He then rose and walked to De Boigne's house in the Rue

Pinon. There he found the four seconds in consultation. He saluted them, and thanked De Boigne for his notice of Lola. The conditions of the encounter were then signed and read. The combatants were to be placed at thirty paces distance, and could make five forward before firing, but each was to step after the other had fired. One was to fire immediately after the other. A coin was spun to determine who should provide the pistols; but it was understood that the weapons were not to have been used before by the combatants. The coin decided in favour of De Beauvallon. D'Ecquevillez then produced a pair of pistols, which he gave the other seconds to understand were his personal property. He and De Flers then went in search of their principal. Dujarier and his friends returned to the Rue Laffitte, where they picked up the doctor, Monsieur de Guise, and drove off, all four, to the Bois de Boulogne.

The rendezvous was a secluded spot near the Restaurant de Madrid. There is, and probably was then, a *tir aux pigeons* close by. The morning was intensely cold, and no one was about. A few snowflakes were falling as the party arrived. There was no sign of De Beauvallon

and his seconds, though it was now ten o'clock. The four men impatiently paced up and down, Bertrand and De Boigne conversing in low tones as to the probable result of the encounter, while Dujarier talked with the doctor on matters in general. De Guise, however, could not refrain from questioning him as to the cause of the affair. The journalist related the episodes at the Frères Provençaux, from his own point of view, and said that D'Ecquevillez had told him that De Beauvallon intended to fight him "because he did not like him." "I naturally replied," continued Dujarier, "that many people might not like me, and I could not be supposed on that account to fight them. D'Ecquevillez retorted that his principal would force me to fight by a blow and an insult. This threat was in itself an insult. I accepted the challenge."

The doctor observed the journalist closely. He was shivering with the cold, and the nervous excitement, which Dumas had remarked in him always at this hour, was manifesting itself. The seconds drew near, and De Guise gave it as his professional opinion that Dujarier was not in a condition to fight. Bertrand and De Boigne joined their entreaties to his, and argued that having waited an hour for the other party,

they could in all honour retire from the field. Dujarier refused to do any such thing. Before all things, like most nervous men, he dreaded the imputation of cowardice. The cold and the excitement made him tremble. His friends would suspect him of fear; therefore, at all hazards, he must give them proof of his courage.

Finding his persuasions futile, De Guise resigned himself to listen to a long and minute account of the quarrel with De Beauvoir. The recital was finished when the sound of carriage wheels was heard. Dujarier's heart must have given a big leap! A shabby cab drove up and out of it jumped De Beauvallon and his seconds. De Boigne accosted the Creole with some asperity. He remarked that it was confoundedly cold, and that he and his principal had been kept waiting for an hour and a half. D'Ecquevillez, who seems to have done most of the talking throughout the whole affair, turned to Bertrand, and explained that they had been delayed by the necessity of purchasing ammunition and by the slowness of the cab horse.

De Boigne now addressed himself to De Beauvallon, and made a final effort to arrange the dispute. "I speak to you," he said, "as one who has had experience of these affairs. There

is nothing to fight about. Your friends have put it into your head that an insult was intended."

"Sir," replied De Beauvallon coldly, "you say there is no motive for this duel. I think differently, since I am here with my seconds. You don't suggest any other course. The position is the same as yesterday, when it was settled that we should fight. Besides, an affair of this sort is not to be arranged on the field."

De Boigne shrugged his shoulders. He had done his utmost for his friend. He and De Flers selected the ground, and with the consent of the other, he measured forty-three paces, diminishing the distance originally agreed to. D'Ecquevillez, meanwhile, had produced his pistols, recognisable by their blue barrels. Bertrand was about to charge one, when he introduced his finger into the muzzle, and withdrew it, black to the depth of the finger-nail. He looked at the other. "These pistols have been tried," he said.

"On my honour," declared D'Ecquevillez, "we have only tried them with powder. Monsieur de Beauvallon has never handled them before."

With this positive assurance Bertrand had to be content. The pistols were again tried with caps. With grave misgivings, he and De

Boigne placed their man. De Beauvallon also took up position. Dujarier took his pistol from his second so clumsily that he moved the trigger and nearly blew De Boigne's head off.

The signal was given. Dujarier fired instantly. His ball flew wide of the mark. He let drop his pistol, and faced his adversary.

De Beauvallon very deliberately raised his arms and covered his opponent. The spectators held their breath. "Fire, damn you! fire!" cried De Boigne, exasperated by his slowness. The Creole pulled the trigger. For an instant Dujarier stood erect. The next, he fell, huddled up on to the ground. The doctor rushed towards him. His practised eye told him that the wound was mortal. The bullet had entered near the bridge of the nose, and broken the occipital bone, so as to produce a concussion of the spine. De Guise assured Dujarier the wound was not serious, and told him to spit. He tried in vain to do so. Bertrand summoned the carriage to approach. De Boigne leant over his friend, and asked him if he suffered much pain. Dujarier, already inarticulate, nodded; his eyelids dropped, and he fell back in the physician's arms. He was dead.

D'Ecquevillez, seeing Dujarier fall, offered

Bertrand his assistance. He was rebuffed, told to gather up his pistols, and to go. He hurried off with the other second and his principal, who murmured: "Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" as he passed his late adversary. "How have I conducted myself?" he asked his second.

"I hope I shall always act in similar circumstances as you did," was the reassuring reply.

Meanwhile, Dumas had gone, full of anxiety, to the Rue Laffitte, to find that his friend had left the house, with what object he guessed. He noticed as a sinister omen that there was blood on the banister. He went away, sad at heart, to await the result of the combat.

Lola, on the receipt of her lover's note, hurried at once to his house. She burst into his bedroom and saw two pistols — Alexandre's, no doubt—lying upon the quilt. Gabriel, Dujarier's servant, who had followed her, shook his head sadly, and said, "My master knows very well he will not return." In an instant Lola was again outside the house, driving to her good friend, Dumas's. The novelist told her that it was with De Beauvallon, not with De Beauvoir, that their friend had gone to exchange shots. "My God!" she cried, "then he is a dead man!"

She rushed back to the Rue Laffitte. She

spent half an hour in agony of mind, when the sound of a carriage stopping fell upon her ears. She flew into the street, and opened the carriage door. A heavy body lurched against her bosom. It was her dead lover.

XV

THE RECKONING

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THE RECKONING

It was not in fair fight that Dujarier had fallen. Before even he had been carried to his grave, with Balzac, Méry, Dumas, and De Girardin as his pall-bearers, the suspicions of all his friends had been aroused. At Dr Véron's, the morning of his death, Bertrand showed Dumas his finger-tip still blackened by the barrel of De Beauvallon's pistol. Would a pistol which had not been charged with ball leave such a stain? Experts present said no. The suspicion that De Beauvallon had made doubly sure of killing his adversary by trying his weapon beforehand ripened in the minds of many into conviction. How, too, had the Creole spent the early part of the morning? Why did he not come with his seconds to the Rue Pinon? What was he doing while Dujarier was awaiting him in the Bois? The affair began to wear a very sinister complexion. Representations were made to the

police. Enquiries were set on foot, and De Beauvallon and D'Ecquevillez promptly retired across the Spanish frontier.

Lola had sustained a staggering blow. She was sincerely attached to Dujarier, who had been more to her than any other man had been. The memory of her husband was hateful. Liszt had flashed suddenly across her path, to disappear a few weeks later. Besides, he had given her up of his own accord. But this man had shared her life for months, had loved her to the last, had cared for her both as a lover and a husband. In his will he left her eighteen shares in the Palais Royal Theatre, representing twenty thousand francs. She referred, years after, and no doubt sincerely, to his death as a loss that could never be made up to her.

The luxury of grief is allowed in scant measure to those who minister to the public's amusement. They must dry their tears quickly. Three weeks after the fatal duel, Lola made her appearance at the Porte-St-Martin Theatre, in *La Biche au Bois*. The audience was no less critical than at the Opera. She was hissed, and with her usual audacity, she exasperated the public still more by expressing her contempt for them upon the stage. So ended her career as a *danseuse* in the French capital.

She lingered on in Paris, notwithstanding, frequenting the society of her dead lover's friends in accordance with his last wishes. The legacy had relieved her for the moment of the necessity of earning her living. She longed to see retribution overtake the man who had robbed her of all that life held dear. Justice seemed for a time to pursue the slayer with leaden feet. In July the Royal Court of Paris practically exonerated the seconds, and De Beauvallon thought it safe to surrender voluntarily. The explanations he gave as to his movements on the 10th and 11th March did not, as he had hoped they would, satisfy the authorities. The Court of Cassation quashed the decision of the lower court, and sent the accused for trial, on the charge of murder, before the Assize Court of Rouen.

The case is one of the most celebrated in the annals of French justice. It all turned on the article in the code of honour that forbids a duellist to make use of arms which he has already tried, and with which he is proficient. All the witnesses—among whom were professed experts—agreed that this rule was absolute. The case, which raised many other nice points of law, was heard before the President of the Tribunal, Monsieur Letendre de Tourville. The prosecu-

tion was conducted by the King's Procurator (General Salveton), the Advocate-General, and two very able counsel, Maitres Léon Duval and Romiguière. But the defence had a tower of strength in the great advocate Berryer, the defender of Ney, Lamennais, Chateaubriand, and Louis Napoléon—the greatest pleader and, after Mirabeau, the greatest orator his country has produced.

A trial whereat Alexandre Dumas and Lola Montez, to say nothing of the lesser lights of the literary and theatrical world, appeared as witnesses, excited immense interest. Dumas produced a sensation which must have rejoiced his heart on entering the witness-box. He was asked his name and profession. "Alexandre Dumas, Marquis Davy de la Pailleterie," he replied with evident complacency; "and I should call myself a dramatist if I were not in the country of Corneille."

"There are degrees in everything," replied the learned President.

Claudin, who heard these oft-quoted words, gives it as his opinion that Dumas expressed himself thus from a genuine sense of modesty, and that the judge did not succeed in being funny.

The great Alexandre was in very good form throughout the whole trial, which lasted from the 26th to the 30th March 1846, inclusive. He expounded the laws and principles of the duel, with copious commentaries. He quoted an authoritative work on the subject, drawn up by a body of noblemen and gentlemen—a work which the judge dryly observed he did not intend to add to his library. At the conclusion of the first part of his evidence (the gist of which we know) he solicited leave to return to Paris, to assist at the representation of one of his dramas in five acts. Dumas never lost an opportunity of advertising himself. He managed also to drag his son into the box, though the latter had really nothing to say.

The frail, fair ladies of the supper-party also had to run the gauntlet of examination and cross-examination. The virtuous ladies of Rouen, anxious to hear the most scandalous details of the case, filled the space reserved for the public, and having feasted their eyes on the *demi-mondaines*, obstinately refused to let these find seats among them. Mademoiselle Liévenne appeared in a charming toilette of blue velvet, with a red Cashmere shawl, and a pearl-grey satin hood. Lola, as befitted the melancholy

occasion, wore the garb of mourning, and never, perhaps, showed to more advantage than in her close-fitting black satin costume and flowing shawl. She was the cynosure of all eyes. Though a year had passed since the event now being discussed, her utterance was choked with sobs, and the reading of Dujarier's last note caused her to shed floods of tears. She declared that had she known it was De Beauvallon with whom her lover intended to fight, she would have communicated with the police and prevented the duel. "I would have gone to the rendezvous myself," she cried with characteristic spirit. In her Memoirs, she adds that she would have fought De Beauvallon herself, and her life-story testifies that this was no empty gasconade.

That Dujarier's death had been premeditated by his antagonist was abundantly proved at the trial. The pistols which the dead man's seconds had been led to believe belonged to D'Ecquevillez were now admitted to be the property of the accused's brother - in - law, Monsieur Granier de Cassagnac. They had been in the possession of De Beauvallon since the eve of the encounter. Circumstantial evidence went to show that he was familiar with the weapons, and had practised with them

on the fatal morning. But the testimony of the witnesses, the facts themselves, the skilful pleading of Duval, prevailed not against the eloquence of Berryer. His magical powers of oratory brought the jury round to his point of view, and De Beauvallon was acquitted of the charge of murder, though cast in damages of twenty thousand francs towards the mother and sister of his victim.

The affair did not end there. The friends of Dujarier refused to be diverted from the trail of vengeance. Fresh and conclusive evidence came to light, and De Beauvallon and D'Ecquevillez were placed on their trial for perjury during the first hearing. As regarded D'Ecquevillez, it was established that he was no viscount, but a *bourgeois* of doubtful antecedents named Vincent, that his rank in the Spanish service was merely that of a militia captain, and that his evidence, in general, was worthless. It was proved that De Beauvallon had tried the pistols the very morning of the duel in a garden at Chaillot, taking aim with them not once, but a dozen times. Dujarier had been the victim of a deliberate conspiracy. Both the accused were found guilty and condemned (9th October 1847) to eight years' imprisonment. Both escaped

from prison during the Revolution of the following year. The principal criminal returned to his native isle, where his liberation was judicially sanctioned. His subsequent appeal to obtain a reversal of his sentence was rejected by the Court of Cassation in 1855.

Lola had left France long before the assassin of her lover was finally brought to justice.

"In another six months," writes "the Englishman in Paris," "her name was almost forgotten by all of us, except by Alexandre Dumas, who now and then alluded to her. Though far from superstitious, Dumas, who had been as much smitten with her as most of her admirers, avowed that he was glad that she had disappeared. 'She has the evil eye,' he said, 'and is sure to bring bad luck to any one who closely links his destiny with hers, for however short a time. You see what has occurred to Dujarier? If ever she is heard of again, it will be in connection with some terrible calamity that has befallen a lover of hers.' We all laughed at him, except Dr Véron, who could have given odds to Solomon Eagle himself at prophesying. For once in a way, however, Alexandre Dumas proved correct. When we did hear again of Lola Montés, it was in connection with the disturbances at Munich, and the abdication of her Royal lover, Louis I. of Bavaria."

XVI

IN QUEST OF A PRINCE

XVI

IN QUEST OF A PRINCE

"THE moment I get a nice, round, lump sum of money, I am going to try to hook a prince." In these words Lola is said to have announced her ambition to "the Englishman in Paris." That gossipy exile, whoever he was in this particular instance, was no friend of hers, and took care, no doubt, to render her expressions as brutally as possible. I do not doubt that he has interpreted her meaning truthfully enough. It is clear that Lola was an inordinately ambitious woman, eager to play a leading part in great affairs. Her association with Dujarier and other active politicians, the glimpses she had so often obtained of courts and thrones, stimulated this longing for power. She felt within her the capacity to rule men, and the ability to surmount great obstacles. A personal courage was hers, such as would have earned its possessor, if a man, the cross of honour. She feared not the bright face of danger, dreading only that circumstance might

put the things she coveted beyond her reach. Valour alone, she knew, is seldom rewarded in a woman. It is considered by the women, and more particularly the men, who do not possess it, unwomanly. Intellect, again, she had; but its development had been checked, its faculties neglected, under the Early Victorian system of women's education. Besides, the most superficial observer could not have failed to see, that while learning in a man was accounted a qualification for responsibilities and honours, in a woman it was regarded as a not altogether enviable peculiarity—like an aquiline nose, or the gift of sword-swallowing. In the five years Lola had passed in the various capitals of Europe, it had become very plain to her that what men supremely prize in women is physical beauty. The governing sex attached no rewards (or, at any rate, the meagrest) to courage and wisdom. They asked woman only to be beautiful. Some insisted that she should also be virtuous, by which they meant she should bestow herself upon one of them exclusively. In other words, they allowed women to influence them only through the senses; and by the means they had themselves selected, the ambitious woman had no choice but to attack them.

Over the grave of Dujarier Lola may well have exclaimed, "Farewell, love!" Every one of her attachments had ended unhappily—the first ingloriously, the last tragically. Under such blows, her nature hardened. Ambition revived as sentiment waned. There was something worth living for still. At Rouen she heard the murderer of her lover acquitted. Bitter and disillusioned, she turned her steps towards Germany. Thanks to Dujarier, she had now "the round, lump sum of money" necessary to the execution of her project; and in Germany, with its thirty-six sovereigns, she could hardly fail to encounter a prince. She travelled about from watering-place to watering-place, from Wiesbaden to Homburg, from Homburg to Baden-Baden, "punting in a small way, not settling down anywhere, and almost deliberately avoiding both Frenchmen and Englishmen." At Baden it was rumoured that the Prince of Orange (probably an old friend of her Simla days) was among her admirers. There also she met that puissant prince, Henry LXXII. of Reuss, who straightway fell in love with her. He invited her to pay a visit to his exiguous dominions, and she went, probably feeling that she was playing the part of sparrow-

hawk. At the Court of Reuss she suffered agonies of boredom. The etiquette was as strict as in the palace of the Most Catholic King, and the deference exacted by Henry LXXII. as profound as though he had been Czar of all the Russias. True, in his territory, only half as large again as the county of Middlesex, he wielded a power as absolute as that autocrat's. Of this pettiness the beautiful stranger soon showed her impatience. Her infirmity of temper betrayed itself. She infringed His Highness's prerogative by chastising his subjects — still, this could be overlooked by an indulgent prince. But when Henry one morning beheld Lola walking straight across his flower-beds, he felt that it was time to vindicate the outraged majesty of the throne. With his own august hands he wrote and signed an order, expelling Mademoiselle Montez from the principality. To this decree effect was given only when His Highness had satisfied to the last pfennig a tremendously long bill for expenses, presented to him by the audacious offender.

As it is hardly possible to take a long walk without overstepping the limits of the principality, not many hours elapsed before Lola was beyond the reach of Henry's wrath. She

had the choice of various retreats. The neighbouring duchy of Saxe-Altenburg she, no doubt, contemptuously dismissed. To the north lay Prussia; but she could expect no welcome there. Frederick William, after her memorable adventure at the review, had given her to understand that his police could be better employed than in teaching her manners. She avoided Weimar, where her old lover, Liszt, had established himself in company with the Princess Zu Sayn-Wittgenstein. She may have lingered awhile in these pretty, petty Thuringian states, with their charming capitals set in the forest glades; and perhaps have made a pilgrimage to the Venusberg, near Eisenach, where her prototype ensnared Tannhäuser. The spirit of that old *minnesänger* was not altogether dead. Something of it glowed in the heart of the grey-haired man who reigned over Bavaria. Deliberately or aimlessly, Lola Montez, the Venus of her generation, journeyed south towards Munich.

XVII

THE KING OF BAVARIA

XVII

THE KING OF BAVARIA

At that time Louis I., who wore the Bavarian crown, was a man sixty-one years old. He, "the most German of the Germans," as he has been styled, was by an odd freak of fortune born in France. His father, Max Joseph, though brother of the Duke of Pfalz-Zweibrücken, commanded a regiment in the French service, and it was at Strasbourg that the child was born in 1786. His father's grenadiers shaved off their moustaches to stuff his pillow with. The name bestowed on him in baptism was that of his godfather, the ill-fated King of France. But the Revolution soon drove him with his family across the Rhine, to Mannheim and to Rohrbach. Death quickly cleared the boy a path to the throne. His father presently succeeded his brother as Duke, and a few years later, upon the extinction of the elder line of the Wittelsbachs, became Elector of Bavaria.

Even in the stormy first decade of the nineteenth century princes had to be educated, and in the year 1803 we find Louis at Göttingen, sitting at the feet of Johannes Müller, who infused him with a lively sense of nationality and a reverence for all things German. This was to stand the Prince in good stead in the dark days that followed. Those were years of profound humiliation for Germany, of poignant suffering for her people. Even in the 'forties few Germans took pride in the name, some of them settled in London and Paris, deeming it almost a reproach. In his country's blackest night the Bavarian prince loudly proclaimed his faith in a glorious dawn. He exulted in the name of German. He was "teutsch" (as he always wrote the word) to the very core.

He was German not least in his passion for the South. Italy was his first, last, and best-beloved mistress. In her bosom he was inspired with that love for the arts which was stronger even than his patriotism. Returning to Germany, he saw with disgust his father embrace the alliance of Napoleon and turn his arms against Austria—German fighting German. At Strasbourg, on hearing the news of the capitulation at Ulm, he dared to say to the Empress Josephine:

LOUIS OF BAVARIA, WHEN ELECTORAL PRINCE.

"The greatest victory for me will be when this, my native city, is united to Germany." He accompanied Max Joseph to the Emperor's headquarters at Linz in 1805, when Bavaria was erected by the conqueror's decree into a kingdom. The new Crown Prince made no secret of his antipathies. Anxious to win him over, Napoleon carried him off to Paris, and only succeeded in disgusting him by his irreverence during divine worship. Louis was a devout and sincere Catholic. From the Tuileries he intrigued for the overthrow of his host and gaoler with Czar Alexander. His father got wind of these negotiations and recalled him to Munich. Thence he was sent to join the Bavarian army in Prussia. With unspeakable bitterness he heard that the victory of Jena was celebrated at his father's capital with a *Te Deum* and public rejoicings. In January 1807, in the train of the conquering army, he reached Berlin. There his first act was to unveil a bust of Frederick the Great!

At the beginning of the campaign against Russia, at Napoleon's request, which was practically a command, Louis took the head of the Bavarian army. Years after, he refused to sanction the publication of a work on his

military achievements at this time. With the war-weary veteran of De Vigny's tale, he might have said: "J'ai appris à detester la guerre, en la faisant avec énergie." For he was no carpet knight. Though compelled to draw the sword against men of his own race and their allies, he wielded it well. Under a hot fire he led his troops across the Narew, and at Pultusk won the Grand Cross of the Order of Max Joseph. Such services could not blind Napoleon to his lieutenant's real sympathies. In his indignation against what he considered the ingratitude and treachery of his ally's son, he is reported to have exclaimed: "Quoi m'empêche de fusiller ce prince?" He dared not go to such desperate lengths. Instead, he superseded Louis in the command of the Bavarian army, at the beginning of the campaign of 1809, by one of his own marshals, Lefebvre, Duke of Danzig. To the Prince was assigned simply the command of a division. He fought well at Abensberg, where the *mot d'ordre* was *Bravoure et Bavière.* "It is to Germans that the Emperor owes this victory over Germans," he boasted bitterly.

In the revolt of the Tyrolese against the Bavarian yoke imposed on them by the French, his heart went out to the gallant insurgents. He

pensioned a son of the patriot Speckbacher, and condoled with Hofer's wife on the execution of her husband. Napoleon's indignation knew no bounds. "This prince," he declared, "shall never reign in Bavaria!" He destined the crown for Eugéne Beauharnais, or one of his children.

But it was Louis's policy that triumphed in 1813. With delight he beheld his father desert the sinking ship of France, and from Salzburg (then belonging to Bavaria) he issued a proclamation, urging all the German people to rise against the common oppressor. Wrede, with a Bavarian army, threw himself across the path of the retreating French at Hanau, to find that the wounded eagle's talons could still snatch a bloody victory. In the campaigns of 1814 and 1815, Louis took no active part. His father dreaded that he might fall into the hands of Napoleon, who regarded him with intense hatred. The Prince had to be content with the part of Tyrtaeus, and in odes, not deficient in merit, stirred the patriotic feelings of his countrymen.

After Waterloo he sheathed the sword that he had wielded reluctantly, but not ingloriously. "I was never a general," he said, "but a soldier, yes—with all my heart." He was now free to devote himself to matters which more strongly,

perhaps, appealed to him. At Vienna and London he watched over the interests of the arts. He pleaded (and not unsuccessfully) for the restitution of the artistic treasures Napoleon had carried off, and wrote on the subject of the Elgin marbles with judgment and critical acumen. He sought the acquaintance of the brilliant and the learned, presiding over a *coterie* of painters, sculptors, and *literati*. The winters of 1817-18 and 1820-21 he spent in the Eternal City, residing at the Bavarian Embassy or at the Villa Malta on the Pincio. He knew Canova and Thorwaldsen, and laid the foundations of his firm and life-long intimacy with the sculptor, Wagner. On the Neue Pinakothek at Munich is a picture by Catel, representing one of those joyous and scholarly *réunions* in which Louis delighted. He is shown seated at a table in a humble *osteria* on the Ripa Grande, in the company of Thorwaldsen, Wagner, the artists Veit, Von Schnorr, and Catel himself, the architect Von Klenze, Professor Ringseis, Count Seinsheim, and Colonel von Gumppenberg. It was in such company, and beneath the blue sky of Italy, that "the most German of the Germans" was happiest. His æsthetic faculties were altogether exotic. His style of literary composition is compared by

an English writer to a dislocation of all the limbs of a human body.

"Nothing can be more un-German, more opposed to the genius of the language, than this extraordinary style, the like of which is not to be found in the whole range of German literature.[1] It is an aberration of which we have an English example in 'Carlylese.'"

Louis succeeded his father as King of Bavaria in October 1825. He was then in his fortieth year. A shrewd connoisseur, he had devoted nearly all his income as Prince to the acquisition of objects of art. It was his ambition to make his capital a new Florence, and to carry out this design the strictest economy was introduced into all departments of the state. The Munich we know was mainly his creation. To him we owe the Glyptothek, of which he had conceived the idea at least as far back as 1805; the beautiful Au Church, the Royal Chapel, the Ludwigskirche, the Church of St Boniface, the splendid throne-room, the bronze monument to the Bavarian soldiers who fell in the Russian campaigns. The quaint old German city was completely transformed. Unfortunately, the royal

[1] It is imitated by Heine in some ironical verse, condoling with Frederick William of Prussia on Lola's preference for Louis.

Mæcenas failed to recognise the worth of native models, such as were to be found in Nuremberg. All his buildings were duplicates, or close imitations, of others on the south side of the Alps. The Triumphal Arch in Ludwigstrasse, with its bronze car drawn by lions, was obviously suggested by the well-known models of Paris and Rome. To Louis's zeal we are indebted also for the Pinakothek and the colossal statue of Bavaria. Finally, in 1830, on the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig, the King laid the foundation-stone of the Walhalla, the temple of German greatness, thus accomplishing a design he had formed twenty-five years before. Lofty as was the execution, the conception was loftier. It took place "just after the Emperor Francis II. had uncrowned himself, declaring that the Holy Roman Empire—the empire of a thousand years—was at an end. It was at such a time, when the fabric that had stood for ten centuries had crumbled into dust; when the tramp of the conqueror threatened to efface all ancient institutions; when every existing dynasty of the continent of Europe was trembling for its existence; when principalities were being moulded into kingdoms, kingdoms dismembered or destroyed, God's very barriers trampled down and passed; when works of art, the heirlooms of a nation, were torn from the land that had produced them to deck the capital of the conqueror; when victory followed

victory—Marengo, Hohenlinden, Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland; when kings' crowns and mitres, like withered leaves, lay strewn upon the ground, and when it might well be feared that in that ancient land soon nothing would be left of its former self to recognise its identity—at such a moment was it, when devastation threatened to put out the lights which had been shining for ages, that the Prince Royal of Bavaria, then twenty-three years of age, resolved to build a monument to the glory of his country."[1]

There were the elements of greatness in Louis of Bavaria. In magnanimity of soul he was very far the superior of those sovereigns to whom historians have accorded the title of "the great." Nor was he lacking, as we have seen, in the will and capacity to give to his loftiest conceptions practical shape.

"Throughout life," says the writer just quoted, "King Louis ordered his expenses with the exactness of a debtor and creditor account in a banker's ledger. The necessary monies for certain undertakings were assigned beforehand for each coming year. Every separate expenditure was provided for from specified sources, and each rubric had a corresponding one belonging to it, whence its expenses were to be defrayed."

No Bond Street dealer could be a shrewder

[1] *Morning Herald*, 3rd March 1868.

judge of the value of a work of art than the Bavarian prince; he was no wasteful *dilettante*, but brought to bear on the embellishment of his capital the keenest business instincts. He watched with unflagging attention the fluctuations in the prices of the treasures he coveted. We find him comparing Thorwaldsen's and Canova's estimates of the value of the Barberini Faun, and refusing to pay an extra scudo for the carriage of a statue. Yet he was not a niggard. Those he honoured with his friendship he never left to want. A sick or indigent artist had only to bring his need to the King's notice, to receive liberal relief. He was a warm-hearted and constant friend. His last letter to Wagner is as affectionate in tone as the first he addressed to him forty-eight years before. The permanency of his friendships was in a great degree due to his good sense in making them. His associates were men, not only of genius and learning, but of sterling worth and character. They were not the kind of men to flatter his vanity, or to humour his foibles. Returning to Rome after his accession, Louis announced his intention of continuing the course of life he had pursued as Prince, but thought he ought to assume some little outward state. Wagner replied: "The

King of Spain certainly used to drive about in a coach and six, with footmen in grand liveries; but, notwithstanding, I never heard that any one had the least respect for him. Simplicity is most consistent with dignity; and the course you formerly pursued, sire, will be the best to pursue in the future."

To this artist-king Germany owes its first railway. A short but very important line was constructed by his command from Nuremberg to Fürth in 1835, and was followed up by lines connecting Munich with Augsburg and Nuremberg with Bamberg. In these projects may be traced the inception of the whole German railway system. Thanks also to Louis, the steamboat first ploughed German waters, a service being inaugurated under his auspices on the Bodensee. The important canal connecting the Danube with the Main, and affording thereby direct water communication between the North Sea and the Black Sea, bears the King's name, and was executed at his order. The idealist, the man whom some writers in their ignorance dismiss as half-*minnesänger*, half-*virtuoso*, was keenly alive to the material needs of his subjects. The commercial treaties concluded with Wurtemberg in 1827 and with

Prussia in 1833 laid the foundations of the Zollverein, itself the basis of the political unity of all Germany. The empire owes much to Louis I. Had he been the monarch of a more powerful state, the imperial crown might have been his. "Were such a dignity offered to him," his brother-in-law, Frederick William, is reported to have said, "the King of Bavaria would accept it for the sake of the picturesque costume!" The sneer evinced a knowledge of the weaker side of a noble character, but it is still open to question whether a Wittelsbach would not have more worthily filled the imperial throne than a Hohenzollern. Humanity and the arts would surely have been gainers.

XVIII

REACTION IN BAVARIA

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All generous ideals took root and blossomed in the heart of the Bavarian prince. He loved his country, he loved the arts, he venerated the Catholic faith, and (oddest of all in a German prince) he loved liberty. The beginning of his reign was marked by the most liberal administration. Extensive reforms were carried out in every department of state. Many old feudal institutions and privileges which had survived the Napoleonic deluge were swept away, including a multitude of archaic courts and jurisdictions. The powers of the censorship of the Press were considerably curtailed, and recognition extended to the Protestants in the departments of public worship and instruction. Retrenchment and economy were enforced upon Louis by his great expenditure on public works. A million florins were saved in the army estimates, and official salaries were seriously cut down. An

economy, not so commendable, was also effected by reducing the pensions to retired civil servants and their widows, whose complaints were distinctly heard above the chorus of approbation that greeted the administration of the Liberal King. Looking, perhaps, too, to the rapid development of the railway system, he suffered the roads of Bavaria to fall into a deplorable state of neglect.

Louis was not a Liberal of the Manchester School. His sympathy with freedom and progress was genuine, and he loyally observed the provisions of a not very democratic constitution. But there can be no doubt that he believed rather in government for the people than by the people. In the particular instance he was abundantly justified, for in general enlightenment he was several centuries ahead of his subjects. Five years after his succession to the throne, his good resolutions were rudely shattered by the Revolution of July. Why that event should have arrested him in the path of progress it is not easy to divine, for Charles X. lost his crown through obstinately opposing, not by stimulating, Liberal tendencies. In the Revolution the reactionary or Ultramontane party of Bavaria saw their chance, however,

and gained the King's ear. They dwelt on the natural alliance of throne and altar, and the identity of liberalism in religion with liberalism in politics. Only in a religious people, they argued, could a king place his trust. Secure of royal protection and encouragement, friars, nuns, and ecclesiastics of all kinds came flocking into Bavaria. Monasteries, convents, and church schools threatened to become as numerous as they are now in England. Some made light of this black-robed invasion, and attributed it to the King's well-known fondness for the mediæval and the picturesque. But a real change had come over Louis. Germany was seething with discontent, and revolution was in the air. The King remembered the fate of his godfather, and decided to take the side of reaction. The censorship of the Press was again enforced. Those who were found guilty of *lèse-majesté* were condemned to make a public apology to the King's portrait or statue — an almost Gilbertian penalty. Soldiers, Protestant and Catholic, were alike ordered to kneel when the Host was carried past. Repressive laws were enacted against the Lutherans and Calvinists, and Germany seemed on the point of passing once more under the sway of Rome.

Louis had lost his head. A few clod-hoppers brawling over their beer appeared to him an attempt at revolution. It justified him in closing the university and calling out the reserves. He established a star-chamber at Landshut, where anonymous accusations were entertained and every accusation entailed conviction. The Jesuits were supposed to have inspired this policy. The rumour was probably true in substance. The children of Loyola are not allowed to do evil that good may come, or to indulge in verbal equivocations, as their enemies allege; but it is their aim to bring the whole world into real and sincere submission to the Roman Church, and to achieve that end they have certainly not hesitated to sacrifice political and social ideals dear to all the rest of mankind. The Jesuit is a Christian produced to his utmost logical extremity. Naturally, the order is very unpopular with people who like to profess Christianity without any intention of bringing their views and conduct into line with it.

A true son of the Church was Carl Abel, a politician of some repute, to whom Louis handed the portfolio of the Interior in April 1858. He was, it is interesting to note, one of

those Bavarian ministers who had accompanied the King's son, Otho, to Greece in the 'twenties, and assisted in schooling the renascent nation in its new political status. He it was who enacted the "knee-bending" order to which allusion has been made; he again who substituted the word "subjects" for "citizens" in the royal decrees and proclamations. His policy was frankly Ultramontane. The publication of Strauss's "Life of Jesus," three years before, had given a powerful stimulus to rationalistic tendencies, and these the Bavarian Government determined at all costs to eradicate. It was in the world of thought and education that they saw the struggle must be waged, and they wisely strove to bring the schools entirely within their control. To prevent the spread of dangerous opinions, it was decreed that all the books used in the universities and schools, even in those of the lowest grade, must be purchased from the official Government depôt. A bad time followed for the booksellers and for every one suspected of liberal opinions. The editor of the Bernstorff papers speaks of Abel's administration as a scandal to all Europe. It was not considered such by the majority of the Bavarian people, who were probably more in sympathy with their ruler's present mood than

with his earlier aspirations towards a Grecian polity and culture. The Jesuits reigned supreme, but it was not without certain faint misgivings that their chiefs heard the news of Lola's arrival in Munich. The dauntless adventuress was a factor that had to be reckoned with.

XIX

THE ENTHRALMENT OF THE KING

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The Court Theatre of Munich, thanks to the King's critical faculty and liberal patronage, had a very high reputation throughout Europe, and seemed to Lola a very proper place for the display of her charms and accomplishments. She applied accordingly to the Director, who upon an exhibition of her powers, announced that they did not come up to his standard. This was probably true; but had Lola danced like Taglioni, she would no doubt have been rejected all the same by an official of this strictly clerical Government. Full of wit and resource, she saw in her rebuff the very opportunity she sought of bringing herself to the notice of a sovereign. She had made a few friends among the *jeunesse dorée* of the Bavarian capital, and through one of these, Count Rechberg, a royal aide-de-camp, she craved an audience of His Majesty. Louis was indisposed to grant it, despite his usually

gracious bearing towards foreign *artistes*. "Am I expected to see every strolling dancer?" he asked pettishly. "Your pardon, sire," said Rechberg, "but this one is well worth seeing." The King hesitated. While he did so Lola Montez stood before him. Tired of waiting in the antechamber, and anticipating a refusal, she had coolly followed an aide-de-camp into the royal presence. Now she stood before the astonished King, dazzlingly beautiful, with downcast eyes, a suppliant mien, and a smile of triumph at the corners of her mouth.

To a passionate admirer of beauty like Louis her loveliness was an all-sufficient excuse for her amazing audacity. His aide-de-camp was right. The woman was well worth seeing. As he gazed upon her youth glowed anew in his sixty-year-old frame, the blood coursed as fiercely as in the time long gone by. Those who saw Lola knew a second spring. Collecting his faculties, the King granted the dancer's prayer —she received his command to appear at the Court Theatre; but he was in no haste to dismiss the suppliant. Lola, says one writer, came, saw, and conquered. The King yielded to her at the first shot. Lola's detractors relate that, glancing at her magnificent bust, he asked in

wonder if such charms could be of nature's making, whereupon the lady, there and then ripping up her corsage, dispelled his doubts. They can believe the story who like to; it sounds in the highest degree improbable. But from this first interview dated the enthralment of the King.

Not only grey-headed rulers but tiny schoolgirls felt the power of the enchantress. Luise von Kobell tells us how, when a child, she saw Lola Montez.[1]

"On the 9th October, 1846, as I was going down Briennerstrasse, near the Bayersdorf Palace, I saw coming my way a lady, gowned in black, with a veil thrown over her head, and a fan in her hand. Suddenly something seemed to flash across my vision, and I stood stock still, gazing into the eyes that had dazzled me. They shone upon me from a pale countenance, which assumed a laughing expression before my bewildered stare. Then she went, or rather swept on, past me. I forgot all my governess's injunctions against looking round, and stood staring after her, till she disappeared from view. Like her, I told myself, must have been the fairies in the nursery tales. I returned home breathless, and told them of my adventure. 'That,' said my father, grimly, 'must have been the Spanish dancer, Lola Montez.'

[1] "Unter den vier ersten Königen Bayerns," 1894.

"I went to the Court Theatre on Saturday, the 10th October; I came much too early to my seat, and read full of eagerness the announcement: '*Der verwunschene Prinz*, a play in three acts, by J. von Plötz. During the two *entr'actes*, Mademoiselle Lola Montez of Madrid will appear in her Spanish national dances.' Full of impatience I saw the curtain rise, sat through the first act, and saw the curtain fall again. Now it rose once more, and I saw my fairy of yesterday—Lola Montez.

"In the pit they clapped and hissed; the last, explained my neighbour, because of the rumours abroad that Lola was an emissary of the English Freemasons, an enemy of the Jesuits—a coquette, too, who had had amorous adventures in all parts of the world, according to the newspapers.

"Lola Montez took the centre of the stage, clothed not in the usual tights and short skirts of the ballet girl, but in a Spanish costume of silk and lace, with here and there a glittering diamond. Fire seemed to shoot from her wonderful blue eyes, and she bowed like one of the Graces before the King, who occupied the royal box. Then she danced after the fashion of her country, swaying on her hips, and changing from one posture to another, each excelling the former in beauty.

"While she danced she riveted the attention of all the spectators, their gaze followed the sinuous swayings of her body, in their expression now of glowing passion, now of lightsome

playfulness. Not till she ceased her rhythmic movements was the spell broken. . . .

"On 14th October 1846, Lola Montez appeared for the second and last time at the Court Theatre. She danced the 'Cachucha' in the comedy, *Der Weiberfeind von Benedix*, and danced the 'Fandango' with Herr Opfermann in the *entr'acte* of the play *Müller und Miller*. In order to drown any manifestations of displeasure, the pit was occupied by an organised *claque* of policemen in plain clothes and theatre attendants. The precaution was unnecessary, as Lola Montez exercised a universal charm. The King had received her in audience, as he was accustomed to receive foreign *artistes*; her beauty and her stimulating conversation captivated Louis I."

"I know not how—I am bewitched," His Majesty said frankly to one of his ministers two days after his first interview with Lola. He had worshipped at the altar of Venus all his life, and might reasonably have believed himself immune against passion, now he had entered his seventh decade. The vision of the radiant stranger haunted him. He sought for some excuse to have her about his person. He had long meditated and spoken of a journey to Spain. He would learn Spanish, and Lola should be his teacher. He discussed the idea

with some of his more intimate advisers, who said nothing to dissuade him. Other hearts than his beat more rapidly at the dancer's approach. Dr Curtius, the royal physician, was of opinion that Señora Montez would be an admirable person to teach the King the Castilian tongue; the aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Nüssbaum, was eager to convey the royal summons to the lady. Lola did not refuse the office of instructress, though the situation was not without its irony, seeing that her knowledge of Spanish was but slight. The reading of Calderon and Cervantes was enlivened and interrupted by her humorous sallies, her unexpected *jeux d'esprit*, by the thousand and one delightful turns and mannerisms by which as much as by her beauty Lola intoxicated men. She was full of the elusive quality that her pseudo-countrymen call *sal*. Her intense vitality effervesced, fizzed, and sparkled like champagne, and every bubble that reached the surface caught a different tint. Taking lessons from a charming woman is one of the shortest ways I know to falling in love with her. Louis's was a very bad case. His emotional capacity by an unusual coincidence, had developed in proportion to his intellect. "His soul is always fresh and young," Lola

declared, no doubt quite sincerely. He had not retained a very large measure of the good looks that distinguished him when a young man, but his bearing was dignified, courtly, gracious—in a word, kingly—and his frank grey-blue all-embracing eyes had in them something appealing. His personality, in short, is summed up by Frau von Kobell as "interesting." His manner was as animated as Lola's, and corresponded to every movement of his mind. I do not see why such a man, even if he be sixty-one years old, should not win a woman's love. Moreover, the staunchest Republican must admit that if there is no divinity, there is a glamour or fascination about a king. He is, at least, uncommon—even in Germany; he holds aloof, his inner life is to some extent veiled in mystery; his setting is spectacular and he rarely appears at a disadvantage. He is never seen rolling in the mire in the football field, affording sport to counsel and reporters in the witness-box, or in any of those undignified situations in which we so often meet our fellows. Above all, he represents power, a faculty more attractive even to women than to men. Ambition prompted Lola to hook a prince, but she found it quite easy to like one for his own sake.

The exact nature of the relations between individual men and women is not in general a legitimate matter for curiosity or speculation. It is a question which concerns the parties only. In this instance, however, it may be in the interests of Louis and Lola to observe that their relations were in all probability what is called platonic. The King's nature was æsthetic, poetical, sentimental; he was eminently capable of that unsensual affection that seems to have animated Dante and Michelangelo. It must not be forgotten, too, that he was sixty years of age. "The sins of youth," he said, "are the virtues of age." He affirmed publicly and solemnly that Lola had been his friend, never his mistress; and the word of Louis of Bavaria is not to be lightly disregarded. Lola repeatedly said the same thing. Nothing to the contrary was ever alleged by the King's immediate *entourage*; and—most significant fact of all—the Queen, Therese of Sachsen-Hildburghausen, never manifested the slightest jealousy of her husband's friend, but, on the contrary, more than once expressed her sympathy with her policy and actions.

It was not, of course, to be expected that the public would take this view of Louis's

relations with the famous adventuress. Least of all would it find acceptance with the Roman Catholic clergy, whose tendency it has ever been to exaggerate the sensual instincts in man's nature and to ignore the subtler, finer phases of passion. Puritan and prurient are generally synonymous terms. Nor were the King's ministers and clerical advisers at all anxious to place a favourable construction on Lola's presence at the court.

The Jesuits' agents in different capitals reported unfavourably on the dancer. They professed to believe, as we have seen—perhaps, they did believe—that she was an emissary of the Freemasons, a body which in England is regarded as a gigantic goose club, but by the Catholic world as the most dangerous of secret anti-clerical societies. Now from what Frau von Kobell tells us, it is plain that the Jesuits looked on Lola as a foe from the moment she set foot in Munich. We must seek for some antecedent cause. The lady's own explanation is improbable, but worth repeating. She alleges that while in Paris she was approached by the agents of the Society, and invited to assist in the conversion of Count Medem, a Russian nobleman. This proposal, possibly because of her inherited dislike of the Roman Church, she declined ; and communicated

the matter to Monsieur Guizot, then Prime Minister, who had long been puzzled by the ever-increasing numbers in which the Russian nobility in Paris were going over to Rome. Their conversion is attributed by Catholics to the apostolic zeal of Madame Swetchine, a Russian lady of some literary attainments, whose *salon* was the rendezvous of the clerical party in Paris. Vandam's informant (if he ever existed in the flesh) and one or two writers with an Ultramontane bias suggest that the feud between Lola and the Jesuits arose simply because it was impossible for the latter to give any countenance to a King's mistress. But we know that they recognised her as their enemy before she became the royal favourite; moreover, German writers say that the clericals had never made any remonstrances or raised any difficulties respecting her predecessors in His Majesty's affections. I see no reason to doubt that Lola's anti-clerical or anti-Catholic sentiments were genuine and frankly expressed; we find similar instances of the *odium theologicum* in Nell Gwynne and Louis de Kéroual. Intercourse with Liszt and Dujarier would have strengthened such a prejudice. In Lola's haughty disregard, too, of the etiquette of courts and

fearlessness in the presence of the great, we may detect the temperament, which would find its political expression in advanced Liberalism.

The rumour that she was an agent of "the English Freemasons," if by that term we may understand the English Liberals, is not to be dismissed as altogether preposterous. Our Government at that time was more or less actively hostile to the ultra-legitimist and clerical tendencies paramount in Central Europe: we backed the Swiss Confederation against the Sonderbund; we sympathised with the Italians in their struggles for freedom; English volunteers fought for the Liberal Christinos against the Ultramontane Carlists. Lola's well-known sympathies, her knowledge of continental courts, above all, her personality, would have recommended her as a most valuable agent to our Foreign Office. We shall see presently that she became the honoured guest of an English ambassador, and how legal proceedings afterwards instituted against her in this country were mysteriously suffered to collapse, as if in obedience to orders from above. Lola never describes herself, it is true, as a secret agent of our Government, but she would naturally have preferred to appear as the independent, irresponsible dictatrix of a nation's policy.

Whatever the cause may have been, antagonism manifested itself between Lola Montez and the King's advisers, official and clerical, within a very few days of her arrival at his court. Louis is said to have introduced her to his ministers as his best friend. The Jesuits immediately circulated the report that she was his mistress, and endeavoured to inflame the Bavarian people against her. In obedience to their principle of the Church first and political consistency a long way after, they instigated a general attack upon King and favourite through the clerical Press of Germany. It was truly remarked in one of the independent organs of opinion that the most extreme radical could not have shown less regard for the person of the sovereign than these champions of legitimacy. Caricature, that pitiable prostitution of a divine art, was assiduously employed. Louis was represented as a crowned satyr, a pug-dog, an ass with a crown tied to his tail; Lola was treated with even less regard for decency. The ape that lurks in every man gibbered in every clerical rag. The curious may inspect some choice examples of this simian humour in Herr Fuchs's interesting work.[1]

Ridicule, so far from killing, as is so often

[1] "Ein Vormärzliches Tanzidyll." Berlin.

said, can be proved by history to be the least potent instrument of attack and persecution wielded by man. Skits break neither bones nor thrones. Ridicule is generally on the side of authority and reaction, and as such, in the long run, on the losing side. Puritanism survived the raillery of seventeenth century wags; the North triumphed, despite the loathsome scurrilities of *Punch*; "Napoleon the Little," succumbed to German strategy, not to Victor Hugo's satiric force; Teetotalism, Socialism, and the Cause of Woman wax stronger daily, in spite of the humorists of the music-halls and the racing rags. The King of Bavaria was not to be shamed or affrighted by all the gutter journalists of Germany. But his smile became a little grim. Archbishop Diepenbrock remonstrated with him as to his assumed relations with the dancer. "Stick to your *stola*, bishop," was the Plantagenet-like answer, "and leave me my Lola." He claimed for his domestic affairs the privacy enjoyed by the meanest of his subjects. His regard for Lola and respect for her opinion grew stronger daily. Dismay spread through the clerical camp. As vilification failed to produce any sensible effect, bribery was attempted. At the instance, no doubt, of Metternich, Louis's

sister, the Dowager Empress Karoline Augusta, offered the favourite two thousand pounds if she would quit Bavaria. The offer was rejected, in what terms our knowledge of Lola's character enables us to imagine. She did not lack money, nor did she crave for it. She loved power for its own sake, and power she now possessed. Under her influence Louis recovered his sanity. The liberal instincts of his youth and prime revived. He became once more the Grecian, and the mediæval fever left him. His impatience of clerical control grew more evident daily.

> "And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise
> Filled the fine empty sheath of a man.—
> The Duke grew straightway brave and wise."

XX

THE ABEL MEMORANDUM

XX

THE ABEL MEMORANDUM

The King's change of policy first found official expression in the Royal Decree of 15th December 1846, transferring the control of the Departments of Education and Public Worship from Abel, the Minister of the Interior, to Baron von Schrenk. The effect of this measure was practically to remove the schools from the power of the Jesuits. Abel saw in it a blow aimed at him by the detested *Andalusierin*. He addressed a letter to the King, reminding him of his zeal and devotion to the Crown, of his attachment to his person, of the unpopularity he had willingly incurred in order to subject the people more thoroughly to royal control. Louis was not greatly affected by this letter; we seldom earn the gratitude of others by reminding them that we have taken upon ourselves blame which ought rightly to be theirs. He was ungrateful enough to say that he had no sympathy with Abel's policy, but that he found him a

convenient man to work with. The minister hoped that the King, like Henri Quatre, would prefer his servant to his favourite, but he was disappointed. He next put his trust in Louis's disinclination to take an active part in the Government; but here again he was deceived. The King, stimulated by Lola, began to exhibit the vigour and activity of youth, and showed a disposition to rule as well as to reign. Baron von Pechmann, the Chief of the Munich Police, was less patient than Abel, and ventured to protest against the consideration shown to "a mere adventuress." The King's blue eyes kindled. "Begone!" he exclaimed angrily; "you will find the air of Landshut purer!" It was a sentence of banishment, which the minister had no choice but to obey.

This opposition on the part of the clericals determined Louis to regularise his new favourite and counsellor's position in his kingdom, and to establish her social rank. He proposed to raise her to the peerage, and as a preliminary measure he signed letters patent, conferring upon her the status and rights of a Bavarian citizen. According to the constitution this decree had to be countersigned by a minister. The document was placed before Abel for his signature. The

crisis had come. The King must now finally decide between minister and favourite, in other words, between reaction and progress. Abel summoned his colleagues to a council and the following remarkable memorandum to His Majesty was the result of their deliberations.[1]

"SIRE,—There are circumstances in which men invested with the inappreciable confidence of their sovereign, and charged with the direction of affairs, are called upon either to renounce their most sacred duties or to expose themselves, at the bidding of their consciences, to the risk of incurring the displeasure of their beloved monarch. This is the sad necessity to which your ministers find themselves reduced by the royal determination to grant to Señora Lola Montez letters of naturalisation. We are incapable of forgetting the oaths we took to your Majesty, and our resolution has never been for a moment doubtful. The proposed naturalisation of Señora Montez was openly characterised by Councillor von Maurer as the greatest calamity with which Bavaria could be afflicted. This was the conviction of the whole Council, and the opinion of all your Majesty's faithful subjects. Since December last the eyes of the nation have been fixed on Munich, The respect for the sovereign becomes weaker and weaker in all minds, because on all sides nothing is heard but the bitterest blame and disapprobation.

[1] I have used and slightly abridged the translation given in the *Morning Herald*.

National feeling is wounded: Bavaria believes itself to be governed by a foreign woman, whose reputation is branded in public opinion. Men like the Bishop of Augsburg [Dr Richarz], whose devotion to your Majesty cannot be disputed, daily shed bitter tears for what is passing before their eyes; the ministers of the Interior and of Finance have witnessed his profound affliction. The Prince Bishop of Breslau [Dr Diepenbrock], hearing of a rumour that he had countenanced the actual state of things, has written to persons in Munich formally and most emphatically expressing his disapprobation. His letter is no longer a secret, and will soon be known to the whole country. Foreign journals every day relate the most scandalous anecdotes, and make the most degrading attacks on your Majesty. The copy of the *Ulner Chronik*, which we subjoin, is a proof of our assertions. In vain do the police attempt to stop the circulation of these journals, which are everywhere read with avidity. The impression which they leave on men's minds is by no means doubtful. It is the same from Berchtesgaden and Passau to Aschaffenburg and Zweibrücken. It is the same throughout Europe, in the cabin of the poor and the palace of the rich. It is not alone the glory and well-being of your Majesty's Government that is compromised, but the very existence of royalty itself. It is this which explains the joy of the enemies of the throne, and the profound grief and despair of all who are faithfully attached to your Majesty, and who are alive to the dangers greater than

any to which it has been exposed. In this state of things, it is inevitable that what is passing will influence the army, and if this bulwark should give way, where would be our resource? The statement, which the undersigned, whose hearts are torn with anguish, venture to place before your Majesty, is not the product of a terrified imagination, but of observations which each has made within the circle of his attributions, during several months. The effect of these circumstances in the ensuing parliamentary session may easily be foreseen. Each of the undersigned is ready to sacrifice for your Majesty his fortune and his life. Your ministers believe that they have given you proofs of their fidelity and attachment, but it is for them a doubly sacred duty to point out to your Majesty the ever-increasing danger of this situation. We beg you to listen to our humble prayer, and not to suppose that it is dictated by any desire to thwart your royal will. It is directed only against a state of things which threatens to destroy the fair fame, power, and future happiness of a beloved King. Your ministers are convinced, after earnest deliberation, that if your Majesty should not deign to give ear to their supplications, they are bound to resign the positions to which the kindness and confidence of their sovereign has called them, and to pray your Majesty to remove the portfolios with which they are entrusted.

(Signed) Von Abel. Von Seinsheim.
Von Gumppenberg. Von Schrenk.

Munich, 11*th February* 1847."

This extraordinary address exhibits the courage, if not the tact and sense of humour of the signatories; but none of them cared to present it. Abel sent it by a messenger to the King, who perused it with mingled amusement and indignation, and then locked it in his desk. He asked Abel if this was the only copy existing, and was answered in the affirmative. But a day or two later the memorandum appeared in print in the columns of the *Augsburger Zeitung*. A preliminary draft had been sent by Abel to a fifth minister, Herr Von Giese, who had left it carelessly upon his bureau. Here it was scanned with interest and curiosity by his elderly sister, and was carried off by her, to be proudly exhibited at a tea-party. Handed round among the guests for examination, it was not long in finding its way into the Press. It was reproduced in the French and English papers. The *Times* devoted an editorial to its contents, and compared the excessive sensibility of the Bishop of Augsburg with the hardened indifference of the English hierarchy to the transgressions of the fourth George and William. The lachrymose prelate contributed hugely to the gaiety of nations. Bernstorff, the Prussian Ambassador, considered the address wanting in respect to the

sovereign; by another statesman it was qualified as unbecoming, injudicious, and crude. More heads than one, it was remarked, had been lost over Lola. No one could have been more amused than the lady herself by this astonishing memorandum.

She had indeed good cause for mirth. The indiscretion of the Cabinet brought about the complete triumph of her policy. The King allowed Abel twenty-four hours to reconsider his attitude, and as the minister stood to his guns, he was formerly dismissed from office on 16th February. His fall involved his colleagues. Louis's return to his earlier ideas, consequent upon his relations with Lola, was made evident in his choice of new ministers. The portfolio of the Interior was entrusted to Baron Zu Rhein, with the intimation that His Majesty wished to be served by men sincerely attached to their religion, but determined to resist any encroachment by the Church upon the rights of the State. Councillor Maurer became Minister of Justice, having presumably recanted the views attributed to him by his late colleagues in the memorandum. He was a man of learning and Liberal tendencies, and was the first Protestant to hold Cabinet rank in Bavaria.

The portfolios of finance and war were given respectively to Councillor Zenetti and Major-General von Hohenhausen. The whole Cabinet was frankly Liberal. Lola had coaxed the King back to sanity, and inflicted a signal defeat upon the clericals. All over Germany she was acclaimed as the heroine of Liberalism. Metternich groaned over the deplorable state of things at Munich, and wrote that this woman had become an instrument of the Radical party. Bernstorff received the news of the fall of Abel's Ministry with satisfaction, accompanied, as it was, by Maurer's assurance that the reign of the Jesuits in Bavaria was at an end.

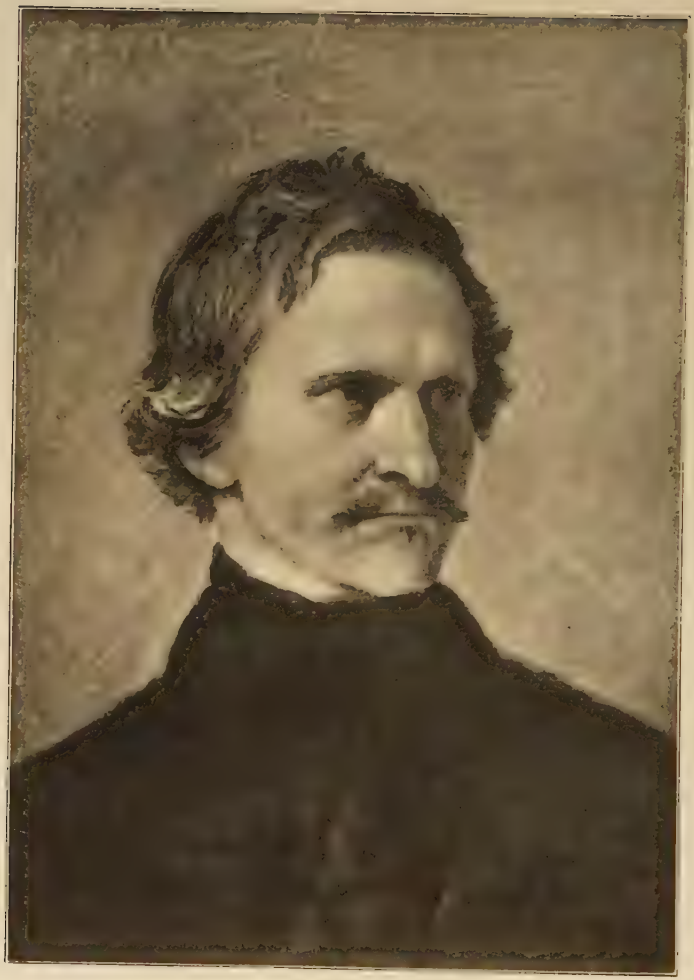
It was at her evening reception at her house in Theresienstrasse that Louis came to announce to Lola the dismissal of his old ministers, and his unalterable attachment to her and to her policy. "I will not give up Lola," he declared; "I will never give up that noble princely being. My kingdom for Lola!" Maurer was obliged to consent to the naturalisation that he had described as a national calamity. Lola was soon after raised to the peerage with the titles of Countess of Landsfeld,[1] and Baroness Rosenthal.

[1] Frau Von Kobell calls her Countess of Landsberg, a place to be found on the map, which Landsfeld is not.

She is described in the register of Bavarian nobility as Maria Dolores Porris y Montez, the daughter of a Carlist officer and Cuban lady. (That the daughter of a follower of Don Carlos should be a deadly foe of all that was Ultramontane must have struck her friends and opponents as odd.) Her titles conveyed with them an estate of importance, and certain feudal rights—the middle and the low justice, perhaps—over two thousand souls. She was made a canoness of the aristocratic order of St Theresa, of which the Queen was the head. To enable her to support this dignity the King endowed her with an annuity of twenty thousand florins. With this and the money bequeathed her by Dujarier she was now rich. A palace befitting her position was ordered to be built for her in Bärerstrasse after the designs of the architect, Metzger, who was one of her most impassioned admirers. Her portrait was painted by royal command, and placed in the Gallery of Beauties, where Louis, it is said, was accustomed to spend hours in rapturous contemplation.

XXI

THE INDISCRETIONS OF A MONARCH



LOUIS I. KING OF BAVARIA

XXI

THE INDISCRETIONS OF A MONARCH

Louis, being a lover of the old school, resorted to verse as an expression of his sentiments towards his new favourite. The editor of the *Times*, years after, described His Majesty as something of a poet, in a small way. How very small that way was the following effusions will show. They were translated by Mr Francis, afterwards editor of the the *Morning Post* and other journals. Unfortunately, or fortunately, they convey no idea of the odd contortions of language characteristic of the original.

"To the Absent Lolita

"The world hates and persecutes
That heart which gave itself to me:
But however much they may try to estrange us,
My heart will cling the more fondly to thine.

"The more they hate, the more thou art beloved;
And more and more is given to thee.
I shall never be torn from thee.

"Against others they have no hate;
It is against thee alone they are enraged;
In thee everything is a crime;
Thy words alone, as deeds, they would punish.

"But the heart's goodness shows itself—
Thou hast a highly elevated mind;
Yet the little who deem themselves great
Would cast thee off as a pariah.

"For evermore I belong to thee;
For evermore thou belongest to me:
What delight! that like the wave
Renews itself out of its eternal spring.

"By thee my life becomes ennobled,
Which without thee was solitary and empty;
Thy love is the nutriment of my heart,
If it had it not, it would die.

"And though thou mightest by all be forsaken,
I will never abandon thee;
For ever will I preserve for thee
Constancy and true German faith."

The next verses relate to the Countess of Landsfeld, in her character as a Liberal martyr.

"From thee, beloved one, time and distance separate me,
But however distant thou might'st be,
I should ever call thee my own,
Thou eternally bright star of my life.

"The wild steed, if you try to daunt him.
Prances, the bolder only, on and on:
The ties of love will tie us so much closer,
If the world attempt to tear thee from me.

"And every persecution thou endurest
Becomes a new link in the chain
Which, because thou art struggling for truth,
Thou hast, for the rest of my life, cast around me.

"Whether near or far off, thou art mine,
And the love which with its lustre glorifies
Is ever renewed and will last for ever.
For evermore our faith will prove itself true."

The following lines are a sonnet in the original, addressed to:—

"LOLITA AND LOUIS

"Men strive with restless zeal to separate us;
Constantly and gloomily they plan thy destruction;
In vain, however, are always their endeavours,
Because they know themselves alone, not us.
Our love will bloom but the brighter for it all—
What gives us bliss cannot be divorced from us—
Those endless flames which burn with sparkling light,
And pervade our existence with enrapturing fire.
Two rocks are we, against which constantly are breaking
The adversaries' craft, the enemies' open rage;
But, scorpion-like, themselves, they pierce with deadly sting—
The sanctuary is guarded by trust and faith;
Thy enemies' cruelty will be revenged on themselves—
Love will compensate for all that we have suffered.

"In the following sonnet," comments the translator, "the royal poet does not clearly intimate whether he has renounced the political or the personal rivals of the fair Lolita:—

"'If, for my sake, thou hast renounced all ties,
I, too, for thee have broken with them all;
Life of my life, I am thine—I am thy thrall—
I hold no compact with thine enemies.
Their blandishments are powerless on me,
No arts will serve to seduce me from thee;
The power of love raises me above them.
With thee my earthly pilgrimage will end.
As is the union between the body and the soul,
So, until death, with thine my being is blended.
In thee I have found what I ne'er yet found in any—
The sight of thee gave new life to my being.
All feeling for any other has died away,
For my eyes read in thine—love!'"

The final example of the King's lyrical genius might be inscribed to "Lolita in Dejection." It is dated the evening of 6th July 1847.

"A glance of the sun of former days,
A ray of light in gloomy night!
Have sounded long-forgotten strings,
And life once more as erst was bright.

"Thus felt I on that night of gladness,
When all was joy through thee alone;
Thy spirit chased from mine its sadness,
No joy was greater than mine own.

"Then was I happy for feeling more deeply
What I possessed and what I lost;
It seemed that thy joy then went for ever,
And that it could never more return.

"Thou hast lost thy cheerfulness,
Persecution has robbed thee of it;
It has deprived thee of thy health,
The happiness of thy life is already departed.

"But the firmer only, and more firmly,
Thou hast tied me to thee;
Thou canst never draw me from thee—
Thou sufferest because thou lovest me."

The King of Bavaria was not a poet; but, as a critic said of Emile Auger, in some remote corner of his being, something was singing.

XXII

THE MINISTRY OF GOOD HOPE

XXII

THE MINISTRY OF GOOD HOPE

The Ultramontanes had no intention of taking their defeat lying down. The Jesuits were fighting for their very existence just over the frontier in Switzerland; the Sonderbund or Catholic League was threatened with an attack at any moment by the forces of the Confederation. Austria and France could do nothing for the League through fear of Palmerston, but it is very probable that help was expected from Bavaria, on which England could not have brought any direct pressure to bear. Munich was the asylum of Ultramontane exiles from all parts of Europe—of French Legitimists, Polish Catholics, and Swiss Jesuits. In Lola's action they detected the hand of the arch-enemy, Palmerston. Liberally supplied with gold from Austria (as Bernstorff did not hesitate to allege), these champions of legitimacy sedulously strove to inflame the people with hatred of the favourite.

Lola's unfortunate temper aided their exertions. The citizens of Munich disliked being boxed on the ears even by the most beautiful of her sex, and Baron Pechmann, who had endeavoured to avenge them, had been banished. Lola, like all people of a rich, generous nature, was fond of dogs. In London she had bought a bull-dog from a man who told Mark Lemon, with a very proper professional reservation, that the lady was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen—*on two legs*. The animal, being indisposed, was sent by his devoted mistress to the Veterinary Hospital at Munich. The patient did not progress very rapidly towards recovery, and Lola remonstrated with the medical man in attendance. His reply was too brusque for her taste. Her ears having been offended, she promptly boxed his. She then carried off her darling, who was soon restored to health and vigour. So complete was his recovery that a week or two later, while accompanying his mistress in the streets of Munich, he prepared himself to attack a carrier who was walking beside his cart. The man anticipated the onslaught by flicking the bull-dog with his whip. The enraged Lola at once smote the man on the ear. The assault was witnessed by several passers-by, whose threaten-

ing attitude compelled her to take refuge in a neighbouring shop. From this dangerous situation she was delivered only by the police. Lola and the King laughed good-humouredly over these incidents; the people of Munich were disposed to look upon them as deadly outrages.

The new favourite, then, was not likely to become popular with the masses; and her enemies could turn with some confidence to the educated classes, as far as they were represented at the University. Students in France, Russia, Italy, and indeed most civilised countries, are admittedly hot-blooded, enthusiastic champions of freedom and progress; in some states they are the very backbone of the revolutionary party. In Bavaria at this time, on the contrary, the students, like those of our English universities, displayed fervent devotion to the ideals of their grandmothers, and held tenaciously by the standards of the nurseries they had so lately quitted. Munich rivalled Oxford and Cambridge in its zeal for Conservatism and obsolete canons. Professor Lassaulx, therefore, was only voicing the sentiments of the University generally when he presented an address to Councillor von Abel, deploring that minister's retirement, and congratulating him upon his adherence to Ultramontane principles.

This was tantamount to a vote of censure on the sovereign. Lassaulx was at once deprived of his chair, despite (it is said by Dr Erdmann) Lola's earnest entreaties with the King. The professor received a tremendous ovation from the students. On the 1st March 1847 they collected in the morning outside his house in Theresienstrasse, cheering him vociferously. Lola, unluckily, was then living in the same street, and having expressed their sympathy with the professor, it occurred to the students that they might as well express their disapprobation of the woman to whom they attributed his downfall. Lola was at lunch when howls and hoots and cries of " Pereat Lola ! " brought her to the window. She was received with yells from the throats of two hundred stout, beer-drinking, Bavarian *burschen*. Amused at the sight, and undismayed, as she ever was, she derisively toasted the mob in a glass of champagne and ate chocolates while she watched their gyrations. Her coolness would have disarmed the enmity of an English crowd, and sent it away cheering. But the sportsman-like qualities are not specially inculcated by the disciples of Loyola, nor were perhaps highly esteemed in the Germany of that date. Presently, the King himself came along the street, and, un-

molested and unnoticed, quietly elbowed his way through the mob. He stood at Lola's door composedly contemplating his excited subjects. He turned to Councillor Hörmann, whom the noise of the disturbance had also brought to the spot. "If she were called Loyola Montez," remarked His Majesty, "I suppose they would cheer her." Then he quietly entered the house. The street was cleared by the mounted police. Louis remained all the afternoon at his favourite's house, and when night fell, attempted to return to the palace, on foot and unattended, as he had come. He was compelled to abandon the attempt. He was received with howls and threats, and could only reach his residence by the aid of a military escort. The streets were filled with the most dangerous elements in the city. A crowd collected before the palace, and cheered the Queen, who, poor lady! must have been embarrassed by this demonstration of sympathy with the emotions of wifely jealousy and injured dignity to which she was a stranger! Before day broke order had been restored by the sabres of the cuirassiers.

Lola, knowing the temper of her countrymen, saw in this attack on a woman a sure means of enlisting their sympathies. She wrote a letter to

the *Times*, in which she gave her own version of affairs in Bavaria in the following terms :—

"I had not been here a week before I discovered that there was a plot existing in the town to get me out of it, and that the party was the Jesuit party. Of course, you are aware that Bavaria has long been their stronghold, and Munich their headquarters. This, naturally, to a person brought up and instructed from her earliest youth to detest this party (I think you will say naturally) irritated me not a little.

"When they saw that I was not likely to leave them, they commenced on another tack, and tried what bribery would do, and actually offered me 50,000 francs yearly if I would quit Bavaria and promise never to return. This, as you may imagine, opened my eyes, and as I indignantly refused their offer, they have not since then left a stone unturned to get rid of me, and have never for an instant ceased persecuting me. I may mention, as one instance, that within the last week a Jesuit professor of philosophy at the University here, by the name of Lassaulx, was removed from his professorship, upon which the party paid and hired a mob to insult me and break the windows of my house, and also to attack the palace; but, thanks to the better feeling of the other party, and the devotedness of the soldiers to His Majesty and his authority, this plot likewise failed."

It was, in fact, as disastrous to its instigators as the famous memorandum. The King perceived

the University to be a hot-bed of clericalism, and promptly invited the majority of the professors to transfer their services to other seats of learning, or to abandon this particular sphere of usefulness altogether. Their chairs were filled by men of moderate views. At the same time the University was freed from the oppressive surveillance of the Ministry; the obnoxious decrees affecting the sale of books were withdrawn; and even the undergraduates felt constrained to testify their gratitude to the liberal King by means of a torchlight procession.

Louis and his new ministers were not wanting in firmness. Several officers and civil servants were transferred to distant stations, and otherwise made to feel the weight of the royal displeasure for having taken part in an Ultramontane gathering at Adelholz, in the Bavarian Highlands, where a protest was raised against Lola's elevation to the peerage. With the bulk of the people, notwithstanding, the King's popularity knew no diminution. He received an enthusiastic greeting at Brückenau, Kissingen, and Aschaffenburg, where he passed the summer. He wrote to his secretary in Munich, on 27th June 1847: "I am very satisfied with my reception throughout my whole progress;" and

on 31st August: "I was surprised, agreeably surprised, by my evidently joyful reception in the Palatinate." In Franconia, inhabited largely by Protestants, the King's change of policy was naturally welcome. Lola's popularity likewise increased by leaps and bounds, though her uncontrollable temper continued to lead her into mischief. A furious quarrel with the commandant of the Würzburg garrison interrupted her journey north to join the Court at Aschaffenburg. The Queen, meanwhile, was the object of a demonstration of sympathy at Bamberg, really directed against the favourite. Certain sections of the aristocracy held aloof from the Countess, with that steadfast devotion to virtue that has always characterised their order. Lola complained of their attitude to His Majesty. Questioned by him, they alluded to the lady's doubtful antecedents as sufficient justification for their refusal to present her to their wives. The King's answer was that of a chivalrous man of the world: "What other woman of so-called high standing would have conducted herself better, had she been abandoned to the world, young, beautiful, and helpless? Bah! I know them all, and I tell you I don't rate too highly the much-belauded virtue of the inexperienced and untried." Louis

was a gentleman as well as a prince, and had the courage to protect the woman he loved. "Mark well," he wrote to a person of rank, "if you are invited to the house the King frequents, and you do not come, the King will see in this an offence against his dignity, and his displeasure will follow." Louis's rule for his courtiers was, in short: "Love me, love Lola."

Social distinction and wealth were not enough to satisfy the Countess of Landsfeld. She was not content to pull the wires; she wanted the appearance of power, as well as its substance. She longed to display openly her talents as a ruler. She was galled by the affected indifference of statesmen, who could not in reality put a single measure into execution without her sanction. While all Germany acclaimed her as the Liberal heroine, Zu Rhein was able afterwards to affirm publicly in the Chamber that the favourite had at no time come between the Cabinet and the sovereign, nor had in any way governed its policy. This statement may be accepted as far as it goes, but the ministers could have done nothing without the King's co-operation, and the King never denied that he was accustomed to consult the Countess on all affairs of state. The credit of the Zu

Rhein - Maurer administration rightly, therefore, belongs in great measure to her. She was always by the King to keep him in the straight way of reform, to safeguard him against a relapse into Ultramontanism. She not unnaturally chafed at what must have seemed the ingratitude of the ministers. She had not yet forgiven Maurer for his reference to her proposed naturalisation as a calamity. Now she regarded him as a puppet which had the impudence to ignore its maker. He got the credit of reforms, she told herself, that she had initiated. Meantime, the clerical Press bombarded her with low abuse. She demanded the enforcement of the censorship and the suppression of the offending journals. Such steps as these, a professedly Liberal Government was loth to take. A collision took place between the favourite and "the Ministry of Good Hope," as it was derisively called. Lola found an instrument ready to her hand in Councillor von Berks, whose devotion to her was warmer than a merely political allegiance. In December, the King decided to reconstitute the Ministry. He appointed Berks to the Department of the Interior, and to Prince Wallerstein, lately Bavarian representative at Paris, he gave the

portfolio of foreign affairs. The new Cabinet was composed entirely of men wholly in sympathy with the views of both sovereign and favourite. By its opponents it was derisively dubbed the Lola Ministry. The *Münchner Zeitung* welcomed its frank and whole-hearted Liberalism as a guarantee of the solution of all the problems of Bavaria's internal and foreign policy. Wallerstein was even more anti-clerical than his predecessors. The Sonderbund was crushed in November by the strategy of Dufour, and the Jesuits came flying from Switzerland into Bavaria. They were forbidden to remain in the country more than a few days. The Press was not gagged, but conciliated. Lola was acclaimed as the good genius of Bavaria. The German Liberals hailed her as a valued ally. To her influence was attributed the tardy addition of Luther's bust to the collection of German worthies in the Walhalla. *Punch*, as a suggestion for a colossal statue of Bavaria, represents Lola upholding a banner inscribed "Freedom and the Cachuca." The "good little thing" of Simla wielded the sceptre, and wielded it well.

XXIII

THE UNCROWNED QUEEN OF BAVARIA

XXIII

THE UNCROWNED QUEEN OF BAVARIA

George Henry Francis, an English journalist, a resident of Munich at that time, and afterwards editor of the *Morning Post*, contributed the following account of Lola's manner of life at this period to *Fraser's Magazine* for January 1848:—

"The house of Lola Montez at Munich presents an elegant contrast to the large, cold lumbering mansions, which are the greatest defect in the general architecture of the city. It is a *bijou*, built under her own eye, by her own architect,[1] and is quite unique in its simplicity and lightness. It is of two storeys, and, allowing for its plainness, is in the Italian style. Elegant bronze balconies from the upper windows, designed by herself, relieve the plainness of the exterior; and long, muslin curtains, slightly tinted, and drawn close, so as to cover the windows, add a transparent, shell-like lightness to the effect. Any English gentleman

[1] This was the house built by Metzger, now number 19 Barerstrasse.

(Lola has a great respect for England and the English) can, on presenting his card, see the interior; but it is not a 'show place.' The interior surpasses everything, even in Munich, where decorative painting and internal fitting has been carried almost to perfection. We are not going to write an upholsterer's catalogue, but as everything was done by the immediate choice and under the direction of the fair Lola, the general characteristics of the place will serve to illustrate her character. Such a tigress, one would think, would scarcely choose so beautiful a den. The smallness of the house precludes much splendour. Its place is supplied by French elegance, Munich art, and English comfort. The walls of the chief room are exquisitely painted by the first artists from the designs found in Herculaneum and Pompeii, but selected with great taste by Lola Montez. The furniture is not gaudily rich, but elegant enough to harmonise with the decorations. A small winter room, adjoining the larger one, is fitted up, quite in the English style, with papered walls, sofas, easy-chairs, all of elegant shape. A chimney, with a first-rate grate of English manufacture, and rich, thick carpets and rugs, complete the illusion; the walls are hung with pictures, among them a Raphael. There are also some of the best works of modern German painters; a good portrait of the King; and a very bad one of the mistress of the mansion. The rest of the establishment bespeaks equally the exquisite taste of the fair owner. The drawing-rooms and

her boudoir are perfect gems. Books, not of a frivolous kind, borrowed from the royal library lie about, and help to show what are the habits of this modern Amazon. Add to these a piano and a guitar, on both of which she accompanies herself with considerable taste and some skill, and an embroidery-frame, at which she produces works that put to shame the best of those exhibited for sale in England; so that you see she is positively compelled at times to resort to some amusement becoming her sex, as a relief from those more masculine or unworthy occupations, in which, according to her reverend enemies, she emulates alternately the example of Peter the Great and Catharine II. The rest of the appointments of the place are in keeping: the coach-house and stabling (her equipages are extremely modest, and her household no more numerous or ostentatious than those of a gentlewoman of means), the culinary offices, and an exquisite bath-room, into which the light comes tinted with rose-colour. At the back of the house is a large flower-garden, in which, during the summer, most of the political consultations between the fair Countess and her sovereign are held.

"For her habits of life, they are simple. She eats little, and of plain food, cooked in the English fashion; drinks little, keeps good hours. rises early, and labours much. The morning, before and after breakfast, is devoted to what we must call semi-public business. The innumerable letters she receives and affairs she has to

arrange, keep herself and her secretary constantly employed during some hours. At breakfast she holds a sort of *levée* of persons of all sorts—ministers *in esse* or *in posse*, professors, artists, English strangers, and foreigners from all parts of the world. As is usual with women of an active mind, she is a great talker; but although an egotist, and with her full share of the vanity of her sex, she understands the art of conversation sufficiently never to be wearisome. Indeed, although capable of violent but evanescent passions—of deep but not revengeful animosities, and occasionally of trivialities and weaknesses very often found in persons suddenly raised to great power—she can be, and almost always is, a very charming person and a delightful companion. Her manners are distinguished, she is a graceful and hospitable hostess, and she understands the art of dressing to perfection.

"The fair despot is passionately fond of homage. She is merciless in her man-killing propensities, and those gentlemen attending her *levées* or her *soirées*, who are perhaps too much absorbed in politics or art to be enamoured of her personal charms, willingly pay respect to her mental attractions and conversational powers.

"On the other hand, Lola Montez has many of the faults recorded of others in like situations. She loves power for its own sake; she is too hasty and too steadfast in her dislikes; she has not sufficiently learned to curb the passion which seems natural to her Spanish blood; she is capricious, and quite capable, when her temper

is inflamed, of rudeness, which, however, she is the first to regret and to apologise for. One absorbing idea she has which poisons her peace. She has devoted her life to the extirpation of the Jesuits, root and branch, from Bavaria. She is too ready to believe in their active influence, and too early overlooks their passive influence. Every one whom she does not like, her prejudice transforms into a Jesuit. Jesuits stare at her in the streets, and peep out from the corners of her rooms. All the world, adverse to herself, are puppets moved to mock and annoy her by these dark and invisible agents. At the same time she has, doubtless, had good cause for this animosity; but these restless suspicions are a weakness quite incompatible with the strength of mind, the force of character, and determination of purpose she exhibits in other respects.

"As a political character, she holds an important position in Bavaria, besides having agents and correspondents in various Courts of Europe. The King generally visits her in the morning from eleven till twelve, or one o'clock; sometimes she is summoned to the palace to consult with him, or with the ministers, on state affairs. It is probable that during her habits of intimacy with some of the principal political writers of Paris, she acquired that knowledge of politics and insight into the manœuvres of diplomatists and statesmen which she now turns to advantage in her new sphere of action. On foreign politics she seems to have very clear ideas; and her novel and powerful method of expressing them

has a great charm for the King, who has himself a comprehensive mind. On the internal politics of Bavaria she has the good sense not to rely upon her own judgment, but to consult these whose studies and occupations qualify them to afford information. For the rest, she is treated by the political men of the country as a substantive power; and, however much they may secretly rebel against her influence, they, at least, find it good policy to acknowledge it. Whatever indiscretions she may, in other respects, commit, she always keeps state secrets, and can, therefore, be consulted with perfect safety, in cases where her original habits of thought render her of invaluable service. Acting under advice, which entirely accords with the King's own general principles, His Majesty has pledged himself to a course of steady but gradual improvement, which is calculated to increase the political freedom and material prosperity of his kingdom, without risking that unity of power, which, in the present state of European affairs, is essential to its protection and advancement. One thing in her praise is, that although she really wields so much power, she never uses it either for the promotion of unworthy persons or, as other favourites have done, for corrupt purposes. Her creation as Countess of Landsfeld, which has alienated from her some of her most honest Liberal supporters, who wished her still to continue in rank, as well as in purposes, one of the people, while it has exasperated against her the powerless, because impoverished, nobility,

was the unsolicited act of the King, legally effected with the consent of the Crown Prince. Without entrenching too far upon a delicate subject, it may be added, that she is not regarded with contempt or detestation by either the male or the female members of the Royal family. She is regarded by them rather as a political personage than as the King's favourite. Her income, including a recent addition from the King, is seventy thousand florins, or little more than five thousand pounds. While upon this subject of her position, it may be added, that it is reported, on good authority, that the Queen of Bavaria (to whom, by the way, the King has always paid the most scrupulous attentions due to her as his wife) very recently made a voluntary communication to her husband, apparently with the knowledge of the princes and other members of the Royal family, that should the King desire, at any future time, that the Countess should, as a matter of right, be presented at Court, she (the Queen) would offer no obstacle.

"The relation subsisting between the King of Bavaria and the Countess of Landsfeld is not of a coarse or vulgar character. The King has a highly poetical mind, and sees his favourite through his imagination. Knowing perfectly well what her antecedents have been, he takes her as she is, and finding in her an agreeable and intellectual companion, and an honest, plain-spoken councillor, he fuses the reality with the ideal in one deep sentiment of affectionate respect."

XXIV

THE DOWNFALL

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THE DOWNFALL

This view of the King's sentiments towards his favourite was not acceptable to that lady's political enemies. It is to be observed, also, that the champions of orthodox morality are the hardest to persuade of the actual existence or possibility of virtue in the individual. It would seem at times that they doubt the efficacy of baptismal waters to wash out original sin. Morality finds strange champions in all lands. The House of Lords, the racing papers, the transpontine stage, and the Irish moon-lighters have all been found at one time or another on the side of the angels. In Bavaria in 1848 the University students, still for the greater part leavened by Ultramontane doctrines, posed as the vindicators of Christian morality, and spoke of Lola as the Scarlet Woman. With singular inconsistency they continued to profess their devotion to the King, who must have obviously

been, in their eyes, a partner in the woman's guilt. The Catholic Church does not discriminate between the sexes as regards this particular offence; moreover, evil example in a prince is held by all moralists to be more serious than in a private person. Lola, also, was believed to be single; Louis was living with his wife. The man's offence, then, would seem from every point of view to have been graver; nor could it have been excused on the ground of weakness of will or understanding, for this in a king would itself have aggravated his guilt. The undergraduates of Munich, however, being pupils of the Jesuits and presumably skilled in casuistry, would no doubt have been able to explain an attitude which appears inconsistent to the non-academic mind.

All the members of the University were not under the thumb of the clericals. Two or three students of the corps Palatia (Pfalz)—probably Protestants—did not hesitate to appear at the Countess of Landsfeld's *salon*, which was the resort of the most brilliant people in Munich. Lola's fancy was taken by the colours of the corps, and she playfully stuck one of the young fellows' caps on her pretty head. The students were, in consequence, expelled from their associa-

tion. A large number of Liberal students thereupon seceded from their respective corps and formed a new one, appropriately called Alemannia. The new body was at once recognised by the King, and endowed with all the privileges of an ancient corps. Lola insisted upon providing every member with an exceedingly smart uniform, at her own expense, and with delight saw them establish their headquarters in a house backing upon her own. The Alemannia became her devoted bodyguard. They watched her house, they escorted her in the street. She graced their festivals, dressed in the close-fitting uniform of the corps. Berks entertained them to a banquet at the palace of Nymphenburg, and in a stirring speech publicly commended their zeal for the cause of enlightenment, humanity, and progress.

Conflicts between the Alemannen and the other corps were frequent. The University was split into two bitterly, venomously hostile camps, and Lola's partisans, being the fewer, seemed likely to have the worst of it. The Rector, Thiersch, intervened, and publicly took the new corps under his protection. For this act he was thanked by the King. But the mutual hatred of the factions knew no abatement. Now the wires

began to feel the touch of other operators than the Jesuits. The revolutionary party was gathering strength in the winter of 1847-48. Any rod was good enough to beat a king with, and no means or agents were to be despised which would weaken his authority, and the respect in which he was held by his subjects. As to the Countess of Landsfeld, she had played her part: she had struck a mortal blow at the Jesuits, she had kept Bavaria in leash while Switzerland throttled the Sonderbund. Now, the Liberals could do without her. Her downfall would involve the King's. The situation was promising. The Radicals determined to let the Clericals pull the chestnuts out of the fire.

The death of Görres, a former revolutionary who had turned mystic and Ultramontane in his latter years, was the signal for a formidable explosion. The police forbade any speech-making at his funeral, which took place on 31st January 1848, but were unable to prevent a pilgrimage to his grave, organised by the Ultramontane students, a week later. The corps Franconia, Bavaria, Isar, and Suabia, turned out in force. The procession soon resolved itself into a demonstration against the King's favourite. The fierce hostile murmur of the mob reached the ears of

Lola in her palace in Barerstrasse. She could, without loss of honour or dignity, have ignored the demonstration: an angry mob is a foe which a brave man hesitates to meet single-handed. But Lola Montez knew not the meaning of fear. With incredible rashness and magnificent courage she deliberately went out into the street to meet her enemies face to face. She was received with groans and insult. "Very well," she cried, "I will have the University closed!" This haughty threat maddened the crowd. A rush was made for her. A gallant band of Alemannen closed round to defend her. Their leader, Count Hirschberg, attempted to use a dagger in his own defence, but it was wrested from him, and he was severely injured. Lola, forced at last to yield before superior numbers, retreated into the Church of the Theatines. The Catholic rowdies, not daring to violate the right of sanctuary, laid siege to the building, and were dispersed with difficulty by the military. The Ultramontanes reckoned it a glorious day; it was such, indeed, for the Countess of Landsfeld, who displayed a courage on this occasion of which no king or prince has ever given proof in any revolutionary crisis. The picture of this woman, attended only by two or three students, deliberately going out to meet a

band of her infuriated enemies, is one which deserves a place in the gallery of heroic deeds.

The King immediately gave effect to Lola's threat. On 9th February he signed a decree closing the University, and ordered all students not natives of the city to leave it within twenty-four hours. The edict threw all Munich into consternation. The departure of upwards of a thousand young men, many of them wealthy and well-connected, meant a serious blow to trade and a rending of innumerable social ties. The students marched, singing songs of adieu, to present a valedictory address to the Rector. The citizens bestirred themselves, and to the number of two thousand signed a petition, imploring His Majesty to reconsider his decision. Louis inclined a favourable ear to their prayers, and announced on 10th February that the University would remain closed only for the summer term.

This act of weakness cost Louis I. his mistress and his crown.

The revolutionary party perceived that this was the moment to strike. The King had yielded; the students were exultant and conscious of their strength; the townsfolk were weary of this ceaseless conflict between the Countess and her foes. Your good, old-fashioned

burgher cares nothing for the rights and wrongs of a public dispute; he wishes to be left in peace to turn a penny into three half-pence, and to achieve that end is as ready to sacrifice the innocent as the guilty. Jacob Venedey, a publicist and Radical famous in his day, writing from Frankfort, did his utmost to fan the flame of revolution.

"The King of Bavaria," so ran an article, "wastes the sweat of the poor country on mistresses and their followers. Everybody knows that the jewellery which Lola wore lately at the theatre cost 60,000 guldens; that her house in the Barerstrasse is a fairy palace; that the Cabinet, the Council of State, and the whole civil service are at her beck and call; that the *gendarmerie* and military are her particular escort; that the best Catholic professors at the University have been dismissed at her caprice. For the people nothing is done."

The last statement was untrue. If, too, the sixty thousand guldens had come out of the people's pockets, Lola had well earned them by her services in emancipating the country from its clerical oppressors.

Louis's concession came too late—if it should have been made at all. On the morning of 11th February, Munich was in insurrection.

Students and citizens flew to arms, and mustered in dense masses before the palace, and in the squares, loudly demanding the expulsion of the Countess of Landsfeld and the immediate reopening of the University. The situation, ministers thought, was critical. The King summoned a Cabinet council, and was prevailed upon to accede to the demands of his insurgent subjects. He who had sworn before all the world that he would never give up Lola, now signed a decree for her banishment from Munich. To save his crown he broke all the solemn pledges he had given her. It was a base capitulation. But Louis of Bavaria was an old man, sixty-two years of age. His vows had been those of a young lover; but he wanted the youthful strength of will and hand that should have defended his mistress against an armed nation. Peace—peace—is ever the craving, the last and strongest passion of age.

The King's surrender to their demands was made known at midday to the angry crowds before the Rathaus. The silly mob hailed with delight the downfall of the woman who had set them free to keep their own consciences, and speak their minds. The King's decision was communicated to Lola by an aide-de-camp.

She was commanded to withdraw at once from the capital. The intrepid woman could with difficulty be persuaded to credit the officer's words. Such pusillanimity was incomprehensible to her. She could not believe that the King would abandon her without drawing the sword. Lieutenant Nüssbaum, at the outbreak of the disturbance, had been locked by a friend in an upper storey room to keep him out of danger, but at the risk of breaking his neck, the young officer had jumped from the window and hastened to offer his sword to the defenceless woman; but the King of Bavaria had surrendered without striking a blow. His own signature at last satisfied Lola of this. She looked up and down the street. No—there was not a single soldier or *gendarme* to protect her. Not for an instant did her nerve forsake her. With a smiling face she quitted the house where she had for nearly a year directed the fortunes of a kingdom. She took the Augsburg train, as if *en route* for Lindau; but alighted at a wayside station and drove to Blutenburg, a few miles from Munich, three of her faithful Alemannen — Peisner, Hertheim, and Laibinger—escorting her.

The rabble, who feared her manlike valour, did not attempt to molest her in her retreat,

but having made sure that she was gone, they broke into her house, pillaging and wrecking. A curious, unaccountable impulse drew the King to the spot, where he must have passed many of the happiest hours of his life. With strange emotions he must have watched the human swine routing in this bower of Venus. He stood there, a pathetic figure—an old man surveying the wreckage of his last and supreme passion. Unheeded and seemingly unrecognised, he was suddenly dealt a violent blow on the head, probably by a revolutionary agent, and tottered back to his palace, bruised and dazed.

The next night, disguised in man's clothes, Lola the intrepid slipped back into Munich, and took refuge in the house of her loyal partisan, Berks. She sent a secret message to the King, confident that if she could see him, she could regain her power. Those must have been anxious moments, while she was awaiting the reply. It came at last, in the form of a letter brought by two police commissaries, Weber and Dichtl. The King refused to see her, and wished that he had come to that decision before. She turned to the officials. They read an order for her expulsion from Bavaria. Lola tore the

document to pieces and threw them in their faces. Not till they presented their pistols at her bosom did she consent to accompany them. It was reported that she had been sent to Lindau on the Bodensee, thence to be conducted into Switzerland. In reality, Louis had selected for her the oddest and most fantastic place of seclusion. The mental crisis through which he had passed seems to have weakened his understanding, and he actually was persuaded by his new clerical friends that Lola's power over him was due to witchcraft. These enlightened Ultramontanes repeated some ridiculous yarn about a great black bird that visited her room by night. At a place called Weinsberg lived a man named Justinus Kerner, who exercised the profession of an exorcist or expeller of devils. To this person's custody was Lola confided on 17th February, as was first learnt from the charlatan's letters, published some ten or fifteen years ago.[1] In one of these he says:—

"Lola Montez arrived here the day before yesterday, accompanied by three Alemannen. It is vexatious that the King should have sent her to me, but they have told him that she is possessed. Before treating her with magic and magnetism, I am trying the hunger cure. I

[1] Fuchs, "Ein Vormärzliches Tanzidyll."

allow her only thirteen drops of raspberry water, and the quarter of a wafer. Tell no one about this—burn this letter."

To another correspondent Kerner writes:—

"Lola has grown astonishingly thin. My son, Theobald, has mesmerised her, and I let her drink asses' milk."

That the fiery, man-compelling Countess should have submitted to this disagreeable tomfoolery, certainly seems to suggest hypnotic influence. It is not unlikely that from the strain of the preceding few days a nervous breakdown had resulted. Or, again, she may have lingered on at Kerner's, in the hope that the King's love for her would revive. But before the month of February was over she had shaken off for ever the dust of Bavaria, and was safe in free Switzerland. Peisner, Hertheim, and Laibinger followed her into exile. Lieutenant Nüssbaum, dismissed from the Bavarian army because of his devotion to her, found a soldier's grave before the redoubts of Düppel.

XXV

THE RISING OF THE PEOPLES

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THE RISING OF THE PEOPLES

Louis of Bavaria had sacrificed his self-respect and the woman he loved to wear the crown a few years longer. The sacrifice proved futile. The expulsion of the strongest personality in Bavaria was merely the first act in the programme of the revolutionary party. On 24th February the King of the French was hurled from his throne, and every sovereign in Europe trembled. The spirit of the Revolution spread from state to state with amazing rapidity. Encouraged by the King's late compliance, the citizens of Munich once more gathered in their strength and demanded that the Chambers should be convoked forthwith. Louis refused to summon a Parliament before the end of May. Nor would he consent to the dismissal of Berks. On the 2nd March barricades were erected in the principal streets, and two days later the arsenal was attacked by the people, and carried after a short struggle. Again Louis yielded to his fears, and dismissed the unpopular minister;

again the surrender came too late. The spark of insurrection in Munich had now become absorbed in the mighty flame of a great European revolution. Everywhere the people were feeling their strength. The Middle Ages, even in Germany, had at last come to an end. Six thousand men, armed with muskets, swords, hatchets, and pikes, surged round the royal palace. In the market-place, the troops were ordered to fire on the insurgents. They remained motionless, leaning on their muskets. Some one called for cheers for the Republic; the crowd responded heartily. Then up rode Prince Charles of Bavaria, the King's brother, and announced that His Majesty had conceded all the demands of his people and pledged his royal word to summon the Chambers on the 16th of the month. With this assurance the excited people feigned to be content, and returned to their homes.

But the opening of the Parliamentary session was attended by a renewal of the disturbances. A report was circulated that the Countess of Landsfeld had returned to the city. The silly people again flew to arms, and demolished the ministry of police. To calm the tumult the King published a decree, withdrawing the rights

of citizenship from his exiled favourite, and forbidding her to re-enter his dominions. With this disgraceful act of violence to his personal feelings, Louis lost all taste for kingship. Rumours of his impending abdication spread through the capital, and now the democratic party stood in fear of an Ultramontane conspiracy to defeat their own policy. More rioting ensued. The Landwehr were eager to rescue the King from the hands of his supposed enemies in the palace. But the old man was weary of the whole comedy, and craved only peace. On 21st March 1848 he took leave of his people in the following proclamation:—

"Bavarians,—A new state of feeling has begun—a state which differs essentially from that embodied in the Constitution according to which I have governed the country twenty-three years. I abdicate my crown in favour of my beloved son, the Crown Prince Maximilian. My government has been in strict accordance with the Constitution; my life has been dedicated to the welfare of my people. I have administered the public money and property as if I had been a republican officer, and I can boldly encounter the severest scrutiny. I offer my heartfelt thanks to all who have adhered to me faithfully, and though I descend from the throne, my heart still glows with affection for Bavaria and for Germany. Louis."

Less than six weeks thus elapsed between the downfall of Lola Montez and the dethronement of the king who had not been man enough to uphold her. Had the positions been reversed —had the woman been able to command one tithe of the forces of which Louis could dispose —not the most powerful coalition of parties would have driven her from the throne without the bloodiest of struggles. In her, as was said of the Duchesse de Berry, there was mind and heart enough for a dozen kings. The country that so angrily threw off the unofficial yoke of its one strong-minded ruler, has since acknowledged the sway of two raving madmen. The Bavarians prefer King Log to King Stork.

Louis soon recovered his popularity with his late subjects. The cares and ambitions of kingship put aside, the tempestuous emotions of manhood at last exhausted, the old man was now free to devote himself wholly to his first and last love, Art. Though now a private person, his interest in the embellishment of Munich and the enrichment of the city's collections never waned. He maintained more than one residence in Bavaria, and was indeed a familiar and well-liked figure in the streets of his old capital; but most of his remaining years

he spent wandering in Italy and the south of France. He lived to witness the expulsion of his son, Otto, from the throne of Greece; the death of his other son and successor, Maximilian II.; and the humiliation of his country by the arms of ever-broadening Prussia. But he could always find consolation in the contemplation of the beautiful, and in the society of men of wit and genius. The last twenty years of his life were, perhaps, the happiest he had known. He died at Nice on 29th February 1868, in the eighty-third year of his age. You may see his equestrian statue at Munich, but the whole city is virtually his monument. A great man he was not, but he was the greatest king Bavaria has yet known. So he passed from the stage of history:—

"A courteous prince, and sociable, sympathetic gentleman; a poet, too, in a small way, taking off his diamond collar at Weimar, and putting it round Goethe's neck; he had a gracious, winning, kingly way of his own, and many as were his faults and his foibles, neither his son nor his grandson supplanted him in the affections of the Bavarian people."[1]

[1] *Times*, 4th March 1868.

XXVI

LOLA IN SEARCH OF A HOME

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LOLA IN SEARCH OF A HOME

"HER last hope for Bavaria being broken," Lola (to use her own words) "turned her attention towards Switzerland, as the nearest shelter from the storm that was beating above her head. She had influenced the King of Bavaria to withhold his consent from a proposition by Austria, which had for its object the destruction of that little republic of Switzerland. If republics are ungrateful, Switzerland certainly was not so to Lola Montez; for it received her with open arms, made her its guest, and generously offered to bestow an establishment upon her for life."

At Bern, the quaint, beautiful old city of fountains and arcades, the deposed dictatrix of Bavaria found a pleasant asylum. She was greeted with especial cordiality by the English Chargé d'Affaires, Mr Robert Peel (son of the more celebrated statesman of the same name), whose fine presence, gaiety of manner, and

brilliant conversational powers rendered him a universal favourite. Peel was a warm supporter of the anti-clerical policy of the Government to which he was accredited, and on political grounds alone, must have felt the strongest sympathy for the Countess of Landsfeld. Peisner, Hertheim, and Laibinger seem to have at last parted company with Lola at Bern, for a letter in her handwriting is preserved, dated from that city, 2nd March 1848, alluding to their probable departure, and directing that a packet be forwarded to Peisner.

From the terraces of Bern, Lola looked forth over Europe and beheld the utter discomfiture of her enemies. If she craved revenge, here was enough and a surfeit. Metternich, the mighty minister, whose gold had contributed to her undoing, was dismissed and driven into exile after forty years of unquestioned sway. Everywhere Liberal principles were in the ascendant. Louis of Bavaria, who had not dared to save her, had now shown himself unable to defend his own throne. Lola must have been more than human if she experienced no inward exultation at the downfall of those who had basely abandoned her. The reign of her clerical foes and conquerors had indeed been

short-lived. Too late did they realise that they had been merely the instruments of their natural antagonists, the extreme revolutionary party.

But if the situation of Europe in the spring of 1848 afforded satisfaction to Lola's vindictive instincts, it offered little incentive to her ambition. The men who were shaping the nation's destinies were cast in the stern, republican mould, and disdained to use the charms and wiles of a woman in the furtherance of their ends. Issues were being fought out on the battlefield, not in the boudoir. Nor did any state, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, present even such slight evidences of stability as a high-flying adventuress might found her plans upon. To re-enter the political arena at such a moment was to plunge headlong into a whirlpool. The old order had changed. The world, hardly tolerant of kings, would no longer brook the domination of their favourites, wise or unwise. The princes pulled long faces, and swore that the Constitution and the Catechism should be henceforward their only rule of life. They vowed to live like respectable citizens, indulging their amiable weaknesses only in privacy. Pericles must no longer converse on affairs of state with Aspasia in the market-place. Beauty

must exert what power it could in the boudoir and on the back stairs. For half a century woman as a political factor almost ceased to be. Only in our own day has her voice again been heard, demanding in stern, menacing tones her right to a larger, nobler part in the councils of the nations than the Pompadours and Maintenons ever dreamed of.

Weary, it may be conceived, of affairs of state, of strife and intrigue, conscious that she had played in her greatest *rôle*, the Countess of Landsfeld quitted Switzerland, once more to try her fortunes in England. She had stepped down from the throne for ever. She embarked for London at Rotterdam on 8th April 1848. By the irony of fate, it was ordered that the bitterest, and once the most powerful, of her foes, the fallen minister, Metternich, should be waiting at the same port seeking the same destination. The news of the Chartist demonstration alone prevented him sailing by the same vessel. "I thank God," he piously remarks, "for having preserved me from contact with her." Assuredly, the meeting would have been a painful and ignominious one for the fallen minister, at any rate.

Lola's arrival in the troubled state of England

passed almost unnoticed. She determined to try her fortunes once more upon the stage, and found, of course, as a celebrity, that she was *persona grata* to the managers and agents. The directors of Covent Garden conceived the ingenious idea of presenting her as herself in a dramatic representation of the recent events at Munich. The play was written and entitled, "Lola Montez, ou la Comtesse d'une Heure," but the Lord Chamberlain declined to license a performance in which living royal personages were introduced.[1] The scheme fell through, and Lola, having a private income to fall back upon, retired into lodgings at 27 Halfmoon Street, Mayfair. There "she invited a few men, including myself," writes the Hon. F. Leveson Gower, "to visit her in the evening. She had lost much of her good looks, but her animated conversation was entertaining."[2] The journalist, George Augustus Sala, then a very young man, describes Lola, on the contrary, as a very handsome lady, "originally the wife of a solicitor," whom he met at a little cigar-shop, under the pillars, in Norreys Street, Regent Street. She proposed

[1] So says Mr Boase in the "Dictionary of National Biography," but quotes no authority.

[2] "Bygone Years," 1905.

that he should write her life, "starting with the assumption that she was a daughter of the famous matador, Montes."[1] Lola's imaginative powers, especially when directed to inventing romantic origins for herself, rivalled those of the heroine of "The Dynamiter." Lord Brougham, that learned but relatively susceptible Chancellor, she also claimed acquaintance with; he lived not far from her, in Grafton Street. It is probable that a woman of Lola's beauty, wit, and remarkable attainments would have numbered the most brilliant and distinguished men in London among her associates, whatever attitude may have been assumed towards her by the little clique of prigs and prudes that arrogated to itself the title of Society.

[1] "Life and Adventures of G. A. Sala," 1896.

XXVII

A SECOND EXPERIMENT IN MATRIMONY

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A SECOND EXPERIMENT IN MATRIMONY

THE company of any number of agreeable men about town and the amenities of life in a Mayfair lodging-house were not, however, likely to content a woman who had lately ruled a kingdom. Experience, it is true, had taught Lola to set limits to her ambition. She had succeeded in her design of hooking a prince, but the catch had been torn off the hook with considerable violence to the angler. It was of no use again to cast her line into royal waters. The fish were now too wary. After the ordeal through which she had passed, Lola sighed for some enduring ties and an established position. She yearned as the most fiery and erratic do at one time or another, for a home. Some think that they who have loved most, love best; but I imagine Lola was a trifle weary of love just then, and longed for some felicity more stable and material. She inclined, in fact, towards the sweet yoke of

domesticity, which was quite a fashionable institution in England at that time. Among her visitors was a Mr George Trafford Heald, son of a rich Chancery barrister, and a cornet in the Second Life Guards. This gallant officer is described as a tall young man, of juvenile figure and aspect, with straight hair and small light brown downy mustachios and whiskers; his turned-up nose gave him an air of great simplicity. As, however, he had, on his coming of age in January 1849, inherited a fortune of between six and seven thousand pounds per annum, he was considered, especially by unattached ladies, in and out of society, a very interesting person. He was very much in love with the Countess of Landsfeld, who, no doubt, easily persuaded herself that she entertained a strong affection for so eligible a suitor. In this respect Lola was, it is safe to say, no more mercenary than half the good and well-brought-up young ladies who were looking out for a good match that season. Heald seems to have been what women call a nice boy; in many ways he probably contrasted favourably with Lola's bolder, more experienced wooers. So when (with many blushes, and in shy stammering words, I doubt not) he offered the adventuress

his hand and heart and fortune, she was able without any natural repugnance to consent to be his wife.

That she ever doubted that she was free to wed again is not to be supposed. In all likelihood, she had been made acquainted with her divorce from Captain James only through the medium of the newspapers, and these would lead any one to believe that the divorce had been made absolute. It was, therefore, without any apprehension that she married Cornet Heald at St George's, Hanover Square, on 19th July 1849. As she left the church on the arm of her youthful husband, she must have thought half-regretfully of the career of adventure that was ended, and yet looked forward with complacency to the life of respectability and affluence that seemed to stretch before her.

Vain hope! By the common domestic women of her time Lola was regarded with bitter hatred. It is unnecessary to analyse this species of animosity. It is compounded, apparently, of jealousy, of some vague religious sentiment of inherited prejudice, and of the trade-unionist's dislike for the blackleg. This attitude, though instinctive, is not unreasonable on the part of the vast numbers of women who consider

marriage a profession, but it is more difficult to understand in the case of an aged lady, long since resigned to celibacy. Such a spinster was Miss Susanna Heald, of Headington Grove, Horncastle, the aunt of Cornet George. This lady manifested great displeasure at her nephew's marriage; and, certain facts having been communicated to her by Lola's numerous enemies, she forthwith set in motion that efficient engine of man's injustice, the English law.

The honeymoon of the newly-wed pair, if they had one at all, was brief, for it was on 6th August, at nine o'clock in the morning, as the Countess of Landsfeld was stepping into her carriage, at 27 Halfmoon Street, that Police Sergeant Gray and Inspector Whall quietly requested a word or two with her. They explained that they held a warrant for her arrest on a charge of bigamy, she having intermarried with Cornet Heald while her lawful husband, Captain James, was still alive. Lola replied that she had been divorced from the captain by an act of Parliament. She added with characteristic petulance: "I don't know whether Captain James is alive or not, and I don't care. I was married in a wrong name, and it wasn't a legal marriage. Lord Brougham was present when

the divorce was granted, and Captain Osborne can prove it. What will the King say?" she murmured, as an after-thought, and referring no doubt to her late royal protector.

They drove to the police-station, and thence to Marlborough Street Police Court. The rumour of the arrest had spread abroad, and the approaches to the court were thronged with people, eager to get a glimpse of the famous Countess of Landsfeld. The "respectable married women" in the crowd no doubt exulted at the anticipated downfall of the woman who could bind men's hearts without the chains of law or Church.

"About half-past one o'clock," says the reporter, "the Countess of Landsfeld, leaning on the arm of Mr Heald, her present husband, came into court, and was accommodated with a seat in front of the bar. Mr Heald was also allowed to have a chair beside her. The lady appeared quite unembarrassed, and smiled several times as she made remarks to her husband. She was stated to be 24 years of age on the police-sheet, but has the look of a woman of at least 30. [She was, in fact, 31.] She was dressed in black silk, with close-fitting black velvet jacket, a plain white straw bonnet trimmed with blue, and blue veil. In figure she is rather plump, and of middle height, of pale dark complexion, the lower part of the

features symmetrical, the upper part not so good, owing to rather prominent cheek bones, but set off by a pair of unusually large blue eyes with long black lashes. Her reputed husband, Mr Heald, during the whole of the proceedings, sat with the countess's hand clasped in both of his own, occasionally giving it a fervent squeeze, and at particular parts of the evidence whispering to her with the fondest air, and pressing her hand to his lips with juvenile warmth." [1]

The magistrate, Mr Peregrine Bingham, having taken his seat, Mr Clarkson opened the case for the prosecution. "Sir," he began, "however painful the circumstances under which the lady who sits at my left (Miss Heald) is placed, she has felt it to be a duty to her deceased brother, the father of the young gentleman now in court, to lay before you the evidence of this young gentleman's marriage with the lady at the bar, and also other evidence which has led her to impute the offence of bigamy to that lady." The learned counsel then went on to state that Lola had been married to Thomas James in Ireland, in July 1837, that a divorce only *a thoro et mensâ* (*i.e.*, a judicial separation) had been pronounced by the Consistory Court in 1842, and that Captain James was alive in India

[1] *Times*, 7th August 1849.

thirty-six days before the celebration of the second marriage with Heald. He deprecated any sort of allusion to the defendant's distinction or notoriety, concluding: "I am further bound to state that this proceeding is on the part of the aunt, Miss Heald, without the consent of Mr Heald, her nephew, who would, no doubt, if he could, prevent these proceedings from being carried on. No one, I think, will venture to impugn the motives or the purity of the intentions of Miss Heald in taking this step. My application is for the lady at the bar to be remanded till we can get the proper witnesses from India to come forward."

Miss Heald, who went into the witness-box, explained her relationship to the accused's second husband, said she had been his guardian, and stated that she considered it was her duty to prosecute this enquiry. When old ladies do any one a bad turn or make themselves a nuisance, they always explain that they are prompted by a sense of duty. For my part, I take up the challenge thrown down sixty years ago by Mr Clarkson, and I impugn the purity of his client's motives. If it had been her object to prevent any family complications in the future, such as might have arisen from the birth of

children to Lola and her nephew, she could have laid the facts before them in private; and if they had refused to separate, she should have remained for ever silent. I entertain no doubt whatever that Miss Susanna Heald wished to ruin the Countess of Landsfeld, and that this was at any rate one of her motives in instituting police court proceedings.

The rest of the evidence was purely formal, and included the testimony of Captain Ingram, in whose ship Lola had come to England seven years before.

Mr Bodkin appeared on behalf of the lady, who had been dragged that morning to a station-house, to answer a charge which, in all his professional experience, was perfectly unparalleled. He never recollected a case of bigamy in which neither the first nor the second husband came forward in the character of a complaining party. The matter would, however, undergo investigation, and if anything illegal had been done, those who had done the illegality would be held responsible for their conduct. As far as the proof had gone he was willing to admit enough had been laid before the court to justify further enquiry. At the proper time he should be prepared to show that the marriage with Mr

Heald was a lawful act. It would seem that the lady had been married when about fifteen or sixteen years old, and that a divorce had taken place. It was evident that the lady had a strong impression that a divorce bill had been obtained in the House of Lords. This, however, might be a mistake, into which the lady would be likely to fall from her ignorance of our laws. Enough had been stated to show that even had the imputed offence been committed, it had been committed in circumstances that appeared to justify the act. He asked the court to admit the lady to bail, to appear upon such a day as might be agreed upon. It was in the highest degree improbable that the parties most interested would attempt to evade an enquiry of this sort. He made no reflection on the motives of the prosecution, but it must be clear that a private and not a public object originated the proceedings.

Mr Bodkin had not detected the flaw in his adversary's case, and he had conceded too much to the prosecution. The magistrate's decision must have mortified his professional feelings as much as it chagrined the amiable Miss Heald.

"Mr Bingham, after a short consultation with Mr Hardwick, said: 'It is observable in the

present case that the person most immediately interested (a person of full age and holding a commission in Her Majesty's army) is not the person to institute or to countenance the prosecution. It is quite compatible with the evidence now produced that the accused may have received by the same mail from India a few hours later than the official return, a letter communicating the death of Captain James from cholera or some other casualty. The law presumes she is innocent till the usual proof of guilt is brought forward. Here that proof is wanting, and the magistrate is requested to act on a presumption of guilt. I feel great reluctance in doing so, even to the extent of a remand without an assurance on the part of the prosecutor that the evidence necessary to ensure a conviction will certainly be producible on a future occasion. No such assurance can be given in this case, because between the 13th June and the last marriage, a period of nearly six weeks, Captain James may have been snatched from life by any of those numerous casualties by which life is beset in a military profession and a tropical climate. However, upon the express admission of the advocate that in his judgment sufficient ground has been laid for further enquiry, and upon his offer to find security, I shall venture to order a remand, and to liberate the prisoner, upon finding two sureties in £500 each, and herself £1,000, for her reappearance here on a future day.'

"Bail was immediately tendered and accepted.

The Countess of Landsfeld and her husband were allowed to remain some time in court in order to elude the gaze of the crowd."

Her counsel's blunder had cost Lola and her husband two thousand pounds.

The prosecution succeeded in ruining the beautiful woman against whom it was directed. A spiteful old lady had taken advantage of a bad law. The whole proceedings were cruel and vindictive. A law framed by bigots and administered by idiots condemned a woman to lose her conjugal rights; and when she attempted to contract new ties and create for herself a home, it threatened her with the punishment of a felon. Decrees like that of Dr Lushington impose on women the alternatives of celibacy and prostitution. Lola, who was too human for the one, and too highly organised for the other, was accordingly bludgeoned, defamed, and driven out of society. Somewhere between this world and Nirvana there should be a flaming hell for the makers of our ancient English law; though, perhaps, we should seek them in the limbo of unbaptized innocents and idiots.

Lola did not share the magistrate's belief in the probability of Captain James having been

carried off by accident or fever. On the contrary, she thought it likely that Miss Heald would succeed in producing him in court. To defeat the malice of her enemies, she and Heald took their departure for the continent, *via* Folkestone and Boulogne, the day after her appearance at Marlborough Street, as an announcement in the *Morning Herald* testifies. For the next two years we have no reliable information as to the movements or the doings of the pair. Certain particulars are supplied by Eugène de Mirecourt, a wholly untrustworthy writer, who speaks ill of everybody, especially of Lola, and is again and again to be convicted of palpable and serious errors. According to his version,[1] the newly married couple proceeded in the first instance to Spain, where two children were born to them. Here Monsieur de Mirecourt makes the first heavy draft on our credulity, for we can find elsewhere no trace of or allusion to the existence of any children of Lola Montez, who could have had no possible interest in abandoning or repudiating them, since they would have constituted a powerful claim on her wealthy young husband and his affluent relatives.

[1] *Les Contemporains*, Paris, 1857. No sources of information are indicated. De Mirecourt's real name was Jacquot.

Despite these pledges of affection, we are told, the domestic life of the Healds was troubled by violent quarrels. At Barcelona, in an access of fury, Lola stabbed her husband with a stiletto. The wounded man took to flight, but unable to stifle his love for his wife, returned to her with assurances of renewed affection. However, he soon found reason to regret this step, and at Madrid again deserted the conjugal roof. Lola advertised for him as for a lost dog, and rewarded the person who found and restored him to her. Here Monsieur de Mirecourt's effervescent Gallic humour seems to have betrayed him into what is at least unplausible.

"Paris," he goes on to say, "had next the honour of sheltering this extraordinary couple. Madame sate for her portrait to Claudius Jacquand, but was obliged to interrupt the sitting every day on word being brought that her husband was about to take to flight. On one occasion she was obliged to pursue him as far as Boulogne. Claudius Jacquand painted them both together [this rather conflicts with the sense of the foregoing sentences], the husband presenting his wife with a rich *parure* of diamonds. When a definite rupture of their relations was decided upon, Heald wished the canvas to be cut in two, as he objected to appearing beside Lola. She, however, obtained possession of the picture in its entirety, and

kept it in her room, with its face turned to the wall. 'My husband,' she explained, 'ought not to see everything I do. It wouldn't be decent.'

"The husband, upon his return to London, obtained a decree of nullity of marriage, and the year following was drowned at Lisbon, the swell of a passing steamer swamping the skiff in which he was taking his pleasure."

Our delightfully unreliable informant adds that Captain James died in 1852, whereas he lived to witness the Franco-German war. De Mirecourt aimed rather at being funny than accurate, and succeeded in being neither one nor the other. In substance his carefully-seasoned story is true. Lola herself refers to her marriage with Heald as another unfortunate experience in matrimony. There was, no doubt, a fundamental difference in their temperaments, and the vagrant life in France and Spain must have brought out only too well the wife's capacity for adventure, as much as it must have bored and irritated the well-connected young Englishman. In London they might have pulled together very well. He would have had his club and his race-meetings; she would have had her well-appointed household, her *salon*, and her box at the Opera. Miss Susanna Heald's interference destroyed Lola's dream of an established position, and wrecked two lives.

LOLA MONTEZ *(after Jules Laure)*.

XXVIII

WESTWARD HO!

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WESTWARD HO!

In the year 1851, the Countess of Landsfeld might well have reflected, with Byron—

> "Through Life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
> I have dragged to three-and-thirty:
> What have these years left to me?
> Nothing—except thirty-three."

She had practically exhausted the possibilities of the old world. In Paris she met with an American agent, named Edward Willis, who made her an offer (in theatrical parlance) for New York. Such a proposal appealed at once to this restless woman, in whom no series of misfortunes could extinguish the thirst for novelty and adventure. Other and more distinguished exiles who had been worsted in the fight with Europe's archaic traditions were also turning their faces westward. The *Humboldt*, in which Lola sailed from Southampton on 20th November 1851, bore, as its most illustrious

passenger, the patriot Kossuth. Of this great Magyar our adventuress saw little, for he was confined to his cabin during the greater part of the voyage with sea-sickness; what she did see she seems to have liked little. She thought him (so she told the reporter of the *New York Tribune*) sinister and distant. She, on an element with which she had been familiar since childhood, was brilliant and sprightly.

The *Humboldt* arrived at New York on Friday, 5th December 1851, and was received with a salute of thirty-one guns — in honour, it need hardly be said, of Kossuth, not of the Countess of Landsfeld. She was not altogether overlooked in the transports of enthusiasm and public rejoicings with which the American people hailed the exiled hero. She was promptly interviewed by the newspaper men, who were surprised to find that she was not a masculine woman, but rather slim in her stature.

"She has," continues the report, "a face of great beauty, and a pair of black [*sic*] Spanish eyes, which flash fire when she is speaking, and make her, with the sparkling wit of her conversation, a great favourite in company. She has black hair, which curls in ringlets by the sides of her face, and her nose is of a pure

Grecian cast, while her cheek bones are high, and give a Moorish appearance to her face.

"She states that many bad things have been said of her by the American Press, yet she is not the woman she has been represented to be; if she were, her admirers, she believes, would be still more numerous. She expresses herself fearful that she will not be properly considered in New York, but hopes that a discriminating public will judge of her after having seen her, and not before."[1]

New York and its people in the middle of the last century have been portrayed unkindly, but I do not think unfairly, by Charles Dickens. That great novelist visited the country for the first time only seven years before Lola landed, and his impressions are largely embodied in "Martin Chuzzlewit." With the type of American delineated therein, it is evident that the Countess of Landsfeld knew exactly how to deal. She succeeded at once in disarming an intensely puritanical people by enthusiastic appeals to their childlike national vanity, by delighted acquiescence in their laughable self-righteousness. Colonel Diver and General Choke could with difficulty have bettered her allusion to their Great Country as "this stupendous asylum

[1] *New York Tribune*, 6th December 1851.

of the world's unfortunates, and last refuge of the victims of the tyranny and wrongs of the Old World! God grant," devoutly prays the Countess, "that it may ever stand as it is now, the noblest column of liberty that was ever reared beneath the arch of heaven!" At the conclusion of her autobiography the American people are told that the pilgrim from the effete forms of Europe must look upon their great Republic with as happy an eye as the storm-tossed and shipwrecked mariner looks upon the first star that shines beneath the receding tempest. These words, indeed, are Mr Chauncy Burr's, but the sentiments beyond doubt are those that Lola constantly affected. Her mastery over men, as is always the case, was due not so much to her physical charms as to her skill in detecting their weakest sides. It says much for her shrewdness that she who had hitherto found it safest to appeal to men through their passions, perceived that the cold Yankee was most vulnerable through so artificial and dispassionate a sentiment as patriotism. Every other woman of her experience would have assumed that the animal predominated in all men, of whatever race and country.

No amount of judicious flattery could, how-

ever, blind the Great and Critical American Public to the fair stranger's imperfections as an actress and a dancer. On 27th December she appeared in the title *rôle* of *Betly, the Tyrolean*, a musical comedy written especially for her, at the Broadway Theatre. It was expected that she would prove a powerful attraction, and seats for the first performance were put up to public auction on the preceding Saturday. But the piece was withdrawn on 19th January 1852, public curiosity having by then been satisfied, and what taste there was in New York not much gratified. Lola, however, secured an engagement at the Walnut Street Theatre, at Philadelphia, that dull, colourless city, which formed the most incongruous of all possible settings for her personality. In May, when a faint breath of romance seems to rustle the trees even in Union Square, she went back to New York. On the 18th she appeared again at the Broadway Theatre in a dramatised version of her career in Munich, written by C. P. T. Ware. She appeared as herself, in the characters of the Danseuse, the Politician, the Countess, the Revolutionist, and the Fugitive. The part of King Louis was sustained by Mr Barry, and Abel—the villain of the piece—by

F. Conway. The play ran five nights only. Even during these brief runs, and though the prices at New York theatres did not exceed a dollar in those days, Lola had amassed a considerable sum of money; but she was by nature prodigal, and easily outpaced the swiftest current of Pactolus. She now hit on a somewhat original scheme, which quickly replenished her exchequer. She organised receptions, to which any one paying a dollar was admitted for the space of a quarter of an hour, to shake her by the hand, gaze upon her in all the splendour of her beauty, and converse with her in English, French, German, or Spanish. The function was hardly consistent with the Countess's dignity, but it revealed in a striking manner her knowledge of the American character. To shake hands with a well-known personage is esteemed by your average Yankee a greater privilege than visiting the Acropolis or wading in the Jordan.

From New York Lola proceeded to New Orleans, that queer old city of creoles and canals.

"A Canadian named Jones," relates De Mirecourt, "acted as her agent, and as there was reason to fear that in this deeply religious state,

her scandalous history might dispose the public against her, the following plan was devised.

"It was reported in the Louisiana journals that the Countess of Landsfeld, who had recently arrived in America, was distributing alms in abundance to the poor, the sick, and the captive, to make amends for her misspent life.

"This announcement having taken some effect, the newspapers went on to inform the public that the famous Countess was shortly about to enter religion; the best informed went so far as to name the day on which she would take the veil.

"But on the appointed day, behold a third and startling item of news!

"Señora Lola Montez, yielding to that instinct of inconstancy so strong in her sex, is announced to have chosen the Opera instead of the Cloister.

"That evening the theatre was crowded to suffocation, and the following days the receipts were enormous."

De Mirecourt, who pronounced young Heald's desire to marry Lola in due and proper form, *idée d'Anglais*, must be allowed his sneer. We who know in what spirit the adventuress ended her career, and to what strange impulses she was subject, may hesitate to dismiss her momentary attraction to the cloister as a mere advertising manœuvre. The woman was disillusioned, sore at heart, and world-weary; her restlessness

bespeaks a mind ill at ease; her beauty showed signs of fading, she had no home, no ties, no kindred. It is likely that for a moment her resolve to end her days in the supposed tranquillity of the convent was genuine enough. It passed; as yet the joy of living was too strong in her to be crushed down.

XXIX

IN THE TRAIL OF THE ARGONAUTS

XXIX

IN THE TRAIL OF THE ARGONAUTS

The Creole City at that time swarmed with gold-seekers on their way to or returning from the newly-found Ophir of the Occident. Though the first headlong rush to California was over, it still drew its thousands every month, and Greeley's famous advice to the young man was followed without having being asked. Lola became infected with the fever. There was much of the gambler in her nature, and her zest for adventure was keener than of old. At this time, too, a positive distaste for civilisation appears to have possessed her. It may have been the vision of a wild, unfettered life in a virgin land that dispelled the sickly hankerings for the cloister.

She sailed across the Gulf of Mexico to San Juan del Norte, or Greytown, as it is now called, the newly opened halfway-house to the gold-fields. Thence the route lay across the beautiful

savannahs of Nicaragua to the Pacific shore. She passed the white-walled towns of Leon and Rivas, which Walker and his filibusters two years later harried with fire and sword. This was an alternative route to that across the isthmus of Panama, which she was fabled to have followed in a book by Russell, the war-correspondent, called the "Adventures of Mrs Seacole." Lola refers to this mendacious romance in her little autobiography, and quotes the following passage in order to characterise it at the finish as a base fabrication from beginning to end:—

"Occasionally some distinguished passengers passed on the upward and downward tides of ruffianism and rascality that swept periodically through Cruces. Came one day Lola Montez, in the full zenith of her evil fame, bound for California with a strange suite. A good-looking, bold woman, with fine, bad eyes and a determined bearing, dressed ostentatiously in perfect male attire, with shirt collar turned down over a velvet lapelled coat, richly worked shirt-front, black hat, French unmentionables, and natty polished boots with spurs. She carried in her hand a handsome riding-whip, which she could use as well in the streets of Cruces as in the towns of Europe; for an impertinent American, presuming, perhaps not unnaturally, upon her reputation, laid hold jestingly of the

tails of her long coat, and, as a lesson, received a cut across his face that must have marked him for some days. I did not see the row which followed, and was glad when the wretched woman rode off on the following morning."

The incident is a spicy little bit of fiction, such as is so easily invented by the fertile journalistic brain. The adjectives applied to Lola also illustrate, in a mildly diverting manner, the strictly orthodox notions of morality entertained by the newspaper press, and the pontifical confidence with which journalists pronounce on questions of conduct.[1]

On the long journey to the golden gate, Lola had as a fellow-passenger a young man named Patrick Purdy Hull, a native of Ohio, and editor of the *San Francisco Whig*. The acquaintance thus formed soon ripened into an attachment. Though, upon her arrival in California, the Countess immediately went on tour among the mining camps, her new victim did not lose sight of her. For the third time Lola went through the ceremony of wedlock. On 1st July 1853 she married Hull at the

[1] By way of digression I cannot refrain from instancing the absurd practice obtaining in some newspapers of printing the title Mrs, when applied to a woman not legally married, in inverted commas, in spite of the dictum of English law which says that any one can call themselves by any description they please.

Church of the Mission Dolores, "in presence," runs the report, "of a select party, among whom were Beverly C. Saunders, Esq., Judge Wills, James E. Wainwright, Esq., A. Bartol, Esq., Louis R. Lull, S. A. Brinsmade, and other prominent citizens"—all among the most remarkable men in that country, no doubt. "The bride and groom have since visited Sacramento, and are now in domestic retirement at San Francisco."[1]

From the reports of remarkable men and prominent citizens shooting each other in the public streets, of bandits raiding the suburbs, of fires and floods, that accompany this announcement, we should imagine that domestic retirement in San Francisco was at that time subject to frequent and unpleasant interruption. On this account, perhaps, Mr and Mrs Hull spent much of their time hunting in the valley of the Sacramento. Lola was in search of new sensations, and for the moment the bear seemed a more attractive quarry than the man. But before long a German medical man, named Adler, himself a mighty hunter, came across her path. His prowess excited her admiration, and he at once fell a victim to the shafts from

[1] *New York Tribune*, 10th August 1853.

her quiver. Hull was discarded and the German reigned in his stead.

In these American *amours* we seem to detect the last flickerings of the flame of passion—the woman's last strenuous efforts to find a real and lasting interest in life. But Lola had played too much with love. That mighty force which she had so often exploited and exerted to the furtherance of her ambitions was no longer at her command. Her capacity for love was exhausted; by passion she was no more to rule or to be ruled.

She had hardly time to tire of her German lover, who accidentally shot himself while following the chase—no bad death for a hunter. It might have been expected that Lola would now quit California and return to more congruous surroundings. But a distaste for men and cities, for the restraints of civilisation, had grown strong within her. Just then she was sick of love and sick of the world. At her best, a splendid animal, with fierce elemental passions, she turned almost instinctively, to draw fresh supplies of vitality from "the green, sweet-hearted earth." She made herself a home in a cabin at Grass Valley, a lawless mining camp, among the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. All her life she had

loved animals, and these she now made her special friends and companions, finding in their marvellous stores of affection and devotion ample compensation for the muddy evanescent emotion that men call love. She did not, of course, lead the life of a hermit. We catch glimpses of her in a despatch from Nevada City, dated 20th January 1854:—

"The merry ringing of sleigh bells has been heard for several days past in our city. Several sleighs have been fitted up, and the young gentlemen have treated the ladies to some dashing turn-outs. On Tuesday last, Lola Montez paid us a visit by this conveyance and a span of horses, decorated with impromptu cow-bells. She flashed like a meteor through the snowflakes and wanton snowballs, and after a tour of the thoroughfares, disappeared in the direction of Grass Valley."

There she continued to dwell during the rest of that year, her liking for the simple life unabated. A correspondent of the *San Francisco Herald*, who visited her on 13th December, describes her as—

"living a quiet, and apparently cosy life, surrounded by her pet birds, dogs, goats, sheep, hens, turkeys, pigs, and her pony. The latter seems to be a favourite with Lola, and is her

companion in all her mountain rambles. Surely it is a strange metamorphosis to find the woman who has gained a world-renowned notoriety, and has played a part upon the stage of life with powerful potentates, and with whose name Europe and the world is familiar, finally settled down at home in the mountain wilds of California."

A strange change, indeed, but no unpleasant life it could have been. What memories, what scenes, must have supplied food for the lonely woman's musings, as she galloped over the hills, or, seated with her dogs, gazed into her great fire of resinous logs! In communion thus with our great mother, treading these virgin forests, and breathing an air hardly yet inhaled by man, she might have attained to a higher, truer plane of existence than that which she finally took to be firm ground. But luck was against her here, as always. A fire swept away the township of Grass Valley, and with it Lola's little homestead —the only home that she had ever known. Her animals were dispersed, she was without funds. But she had renewed her stock of vitality at Nature's fountains. She went on her travels again, reinvigorated: a coarser woman, no doubt, thanks to her contact with miners

and hunters, but, perhaps, a better one. She still loved the new auriferous lands. In the track of the sun she would continue to journey, and in June sailed from California across the ocean to Australia.

XXX

IN AUSTRALIA

XXX

IN AUSTRALIA

EVEN to the antipodes—in the 'fifties unconnected by the telegraph with the rest of the world, and distant a three months' journey from England—the fame of the Countess of Landsfeld had extended. Her name had travelled completely round the world, and was as familiar to the people of Sydney as to those of London and Paris. Lola found that her prolonged rest cure had weakened in no way her hold on public curiosity. The moment for her arrival in New South Wales was not, however, well chosen. Commerce and agriculture were alike depressed, and the mind of the Colonists was preoccupied with the business of constitution-making. The city lay, too, under the spell of a celebrated Irish singer, Miss Catharine Hayes, "the sweet swan of Erin." It is, perhaps, worth noting that this vocalist was born at the same town as Lola, was married at the same church (St George's,

Hanover Square), and was to die the same year; that she made her *début* under the same manager (Benjamin Lumley), at the same theatre, and that the two women had for the last year or two trodden undeviatingly in each other's footsteps. Miss Hayes had been in possession of the Prince of Wales's Theatre nearly a fortnight, when Lola's arrival startled the eldest Australian city. The newcomer was engaged by Tonning of the Victoria Theatre, and was announced to appear, together with Mr Lambert, Mr Falland, and Mr C. Jones, on 23rd August 1855, in the four-act drama, *Lola Montez in Bavaria*. The theatre was crowded to excess.

"The Countess looked charming, and acted very archly. She was cheered vociferously, and recalled before the curtain, when she delivered a short address. Mr Lambert (well known in London) created quite a sensation in the King of Bavaria (by which name he is now known), and at the end of the performance the Countess presented him with a handsome bundle of cigarettes—a very great compliment, as she is an inveterate smoker, and seldom gives any cigars away.

"The excitement about her immediately empties the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and Miss Hayes is then taken suddenly ill. Two nights after the Countess of Landsfeld is seriously indis-

posed, and Miss Hayes recovers. Her recovery restores Lola Montez to perfect health."[1]

On 27th August she appeared in *Yelva, or the Orphan of Russia*, "a new and exciting drama" she had herself translated from the French. On Wednesday, 6th September, she took a benefit, playing in *The Follies of a Night*, and two farces. Into one of these she introduced her "Spider Dance," which seems to have outraged colonial opinion. We need not condemn it on that account as immodest, for in our own day we have seen a performance interdicted as offensive to public morals in Manchester, and pronounced (rightly) to be the quintessence of mobile grace and the truest poetry of motion in the not less considerable city of London. Immodesty in the minds of many people definitely connotes that which pleases the eyes and the senses.

Business continued dull at Sydney, and Lola departed in the second week of September for Melbourne. A dispute had arisen between her and another member of her company, Mrs Fiddes, who issued a writ of attachment against her. Brown, the sheriff, went aboard the

[1] *Era*, 6th January 1856.

steamer to apprehend Lola, who retired to her cabin till the vessel was well under weigh. She then sent word that the officer could arrest her if he would, but she was obliged to tell him that she was quite naked. The bold expedient was, of course, successful. "Poor Brown," we are told, "blushed and retired, and was put on shore at the Heads, about twenty miles from Sydney, and was greeted on his return to the city with roars of laughter." The sheriff evidently did not object to repeating a good story, even at his own expense.

At Melbourne, Lola must have been vividly reminded of California. The gold fever was at its height. The population of the Port Philip district had swollen in five years from 76,000 to 364,000, of which number at least two-thirds were men. Men, too, they were, of every nationality under the sun, and of every class, though the more criminal and dangerous elements were in the ascendant. In '55 life and property were, notwithstanding, somewhat more secure here than in California, thanks to the firmer, less corrupt administration of British officials. Prices were, it need not be said, extravagantly high, though the barest necessities of decent life were hardly obtainable outside

Melbourne and Geelong. A goldfield would seem to be one of the most brutalising environments to which a human being can adapt himself.

For our knowledge of Lola's doings in the Victorian capital, we are indebted to the *Era's* local correspondent. He writes:—

"Lola Montez made her *début* on 21st September, in a short drama allusive to her own Bavarian transactions, but the piece might well have borne curtailment. There was a very crowded audience. The *ci-devant* Countess of Landsfeld seemed determined to preserve her notoriety intact by the selection, but entrenched so far upon decorum in the 'Spider Dance' on a subsequent evening, that she did not face the clamour raised in consequence till the objectionable portions were agreed to be omitted. She is certainly a very singular character, but there is an ever lively and brusque style in her action that seems to catch general approbation for the time being.

"After a brief stay, Lola departed for Geelong; but there, I learn, her performances were freely condemned. Indeed, their laxness was also much canvassed with us, and the more staid of the visitors openly enough expressed their censure. Subsequently to the performance, Dr Milman demanded of the Mayor at the City Court, in the name of an outraged community, that a warrant be issued against all repetition

of the performances of Mme. Lola Montez at the Theatre Royal. The Mayor referred the matter to the private room of the magistrates, considering that should be the proper place for its discussion. The bench declared that the law would not sustain them in issuing a warrant unless the Doctor had actually witnessed the performance, and had his information properly attested by witnesses. This he declared he would do."

The methods of these self-constituted champions of outraged morality are the same in every age. They condemn first, and collect evidence afterwards—if at all.

Opinion in Geelong does not seem to have been as hostile as the *Era's* correspondent supposed. In the *Geelong Advertiser* of 10th October is to be found the following paragraph:—

"Illness of Lola Montez

"Owing to severe indisposition, this talented actress is unable to appear before a Geelong audience. When competent to perform, her reappearance will be duly notified. Madame is suffering from severe cold and bronchitis, and is now under the care of Dr Thompson, of Melbourne. To previous indisposition was superadded a severe attack induced by exposure to the thunderstorm on Saturday."

Lola's illness was of a passing character. That

it in no way impaired her vigour we shall presently see. From Melbourne she proceeded to the goldfields, moving among the most desperate characters of the two hemispheres undismayed and unafraid, a woman capable of defending herself with whip and tongue. A singular character, in truth, was hers, thus equally at home in kings' courts and miners' camps, able to parry and to counterplot against the schemes and intrigues of Metternich, able to subdue and to tame the half-savage ex-convicts and desperadoes of the Australian diggings.

At Ballaarat occurred the celebrated fracas with Mr Seekamp. This man was the editor of the local newspaper (the *Times*), and upon Lola's arrival in the town, he published an article, putting the worst construction on the episodes of her past life, and reflecting in uncomplimentary terms on her character. He was, no doubt, another guardian of public morality, which in mining camps is, of course, a very delicate growth. A few evenings afterwards, he was so rash as to call at the United States Hotel, where the woman he had traduced was staying. Being informed that he was below, Lola ran downstairs with a riding-whip, and laid it across his back with right good will.

The journalist also held a whip, with which he defended himself lustily. Before long the combatants had each other literally by the hair. The bystanders interposed, and the two were separated, but not before life-preservers and revolvers had been produced. It seems to us an unedifying performance, though a woman, if insulted, has undoubtedly the right to chastise her offender physically, if she is able. Such was the view taken by the miners of Ballaarat. At the theatre that evening she was the object of an ovation, which she acknowledged at the conclusion of the performance.

"I thank you," she said, "most sincerely for your friendship. I regret to be obliged to refer again to Mr Seekamp, but it is not my fault, as he again in this morning's paper repeated his attack upon me. You have heard of the scene that took place this afternoon. Mr Seekamp threatens to continue his charges against my character. I offered, though a woman, to meet him with pistols; but the coward who could beat a woman, ran from a woman. He says he will drive me off the diggings; but I will change the tables, and make Seekamp *de*camp (applause). My good friends, again I thank you."[1]

[1] *Morning Herald*, 7th May 1856.

This conduct was "unladylike," no doubt, but courageous; ungracious, but absolutely necessary.

Seekamp, bruised and humiliated, thirsted for revenge. We find him publishing a story of his conqueror's defeat in the *Ballaarat Times*. The authority can hardly be regarded as unimpeachable, but with amusing simplicity it has been accepted as such by all who have written about Lola. According, then, to the ungallant Mr Seekamp, the Countess of Landsfeld was engaged by a manager, named Crosby—of what theatre is not stated. At "treasury" the actress had a misunderstanding with this gentleman, and flew into a violent rage. At this opportune moment a relief force appeared in the person of Mrs Crosby, armed with a whip. With this she chastised Lola so severely that the weapon broke. The antagonists then threw themselves upon each other, and the rest (says the delicately-minded journalist) may be imagined rather than described. Mr Seekamp's recent experience should indeed have enabled him to imagine such a scene without difficulty; in fact, he probably imagined this one. He concludes: "At last this terrible virago has found, not her master, but her mistress, and for many a long day will be incapable of performing at any theatre."

These words were written, possibly, while Lola was on her way to Europe. She appears to have quitted Australia in March or April 1856. With her arrival in France in August that year, she completed her trip round the world.

XXXI

LOLA AS A LECTURER

XXXI

LOLA AS A LECTURER

We have no knowledge of the business that took Lola once more to France on this occasion. She probably went there to spend, in the most agreeable way possible, the considerable sums she had amassed in her Australian tour. It may be supposed that she spent some time at Paris, renewing the acquaintance of her old friends. Dumas, Méry, De Beauvoir, were all living, and death had made few gaps in her circle of friends during the past ten years. In August, Lola followed the fashionable crowd to the southern watering-places, and stayed at St Jean de Luz, within easy reach of the imperial court at Biarritz. Hence she addressed this extraordinary letter to the *Estafette*:—

"St Jean de Luz, Hôtel du Cygne,
"*2nd September* 1856.

"The Belgian newspapers, and some French ones, have asserted that the suicide of the actor, Mauclerc, who, it is reported, has thrown himself

from the summits of the Pic du Midi, was caused by domestic troubles for which I was responsible. This is a calumny which M. Mauclerc himself will be ready to refute. We separated amicably, it is true, after eight days of married life, but urged only by our common and imperious need of personal liberty. It is probable that the tragedy of the Pic du Midi exists only in the imagination of some journalist on the look-out for sensational news. Trusting to your sense of fairness to insert this explanation in your excellent journal, I remain, yours, etc., LOLA MONTEZ."

This letter was copied by *La Presse*, which De Girardin still edited, and was presently noticed by the person most interested. His reply was duly published:—

"BAYONNE, *9th September* 1856.

"SIR,—I read in your issue of the 7th inst. a letter from Lola Montez, wherein there is talk of a suicide of which I have been the victim, and a marriage in which I have been principal actor. I am a complete stranger to such catastrophes. I have never had the least intention of throwing myself from the Pic du Midi, or from any other peak, and I do not recollect having had the advantage of marrying—even for eight days—the celebrated Countess of Landsfeld,—Yours, etc., MAUCLERC."[1]

The simplest and most probable explanation of

[1] De Mirecourt.

this affair is to set it down as a hoax. Bayonne and St Jean de Luz are neighbouring towns, and it is possible that the actor had (perhaps unwittingly) incurred the anger of the Countess, who devised this rather elaborate means of revenge.

Soon after, Lola returned to the United States, a country for which she had conceived a strong liking. She considered it her home, says the Rev. F. L. Hawks, and had a sincere admiration for its institutions. Lola was by nature a republican, and intimacy with sovereigns had not much weakened her distaste for them.

> "'To Freedom ever true, true, true,
> All his life long was Harlequin!"

On 2nd February 1857 we find her fulfilling a week's engagement at the Green Street Theatre at Albany, acting in *The Eton Boy*, *The Follies of a Night*, and *Lola in Bavaria*. She was not unknown at the state capital, having appeared there, with a *troupe* of twelve dancers, at the Museum, in May 1852. On the present occasion she gave another proof of her dare-devil courage, by crossing the Hudson River in an open skiff among the floating ice.

"She got over in safety, but part of her ward-

robe was carried down stream. By going to Troy she could have avoided all danger, but her love of notoriety led her to offer a hundred dollars to be carried across here." [1]

This recklessness may have proceeded from that want of interest in life, that utter sense of desolation, which assailed her whenever she was not distracted by travel and adventure. A lonely, disenchanted woman, without any ties or hold on life, she found herself now on the verge of forty. Her days for adventure had passed. At times she must have sighed for her home among the Californian foothills. Surely it was wise and dignified, for one who had exhausted her strength and vitality in the struggles of an artificial society, to throw herself on the placid bosom of our common mother? There, in time, she would have awakened to fuller comprehension of man's place in the universe, and have learned at once the true value of all her past actions, and the futility of remorse. But in New York no one listened for the whisperings of Nature; instead, they fancied they heard voices from some other world. Women who have lost their hold on life readily give ear to visionaries: having

[1] Phelps, "Players of a Century."

exhausted the joys of this world, they wish to test those of another. Lola became a believer in spiritualism. The imagined touch of some fatuous phantom would thrill her as no man's had power to do. One day she announced that the spirits had directed her to abandon the stage, and to become a lecturer. Apparently, however, she had no confidence in their ability to inspire her on the platform, for she caused her lectures to be written by the Rev. C. Chauncy Burr. At the *séances* she seems to have been brought into touch (in two senses) with several of the clergy of various Protestant denominations. Her first lecture was delivered at a place of worship called the Hope Chapel, 720 Broadway, New York, on 3rd February 1858.

"Lola Montez at Hope Chapel is good," chuckles a reporter. "It is plain that the scent of the roses hangs round her still. We have heard some queer things in that conventicle in our time, and have now and then assisted at an entertainment there twice as funny, but not half so intellectual nor half so wholesome, as the lecture our desperado in dimity gave us last night."

The New York pressman was more easily pleased than is the modern reader. Lola's lectures were published that same year in book

form, together with her autobiography, and they may be pronounced very poor stuff. They are respectively headed, "Beautiful Women," "Gallantry," "Heroines of History," "The Comic Aspect of Love," "Wits and Women of Paris," and "Romanism." Here and there their dullness is enlivened by a flash of Lola's own native wit, or a shrewd observation that only her experience could have supplied. Sometimes she begins by what is evidently an exposition of her own views, winding up with some trite moralisings calculated to appease her audience. Speaking, for instance, of the heroines of history, she dwells with enthusiasm on the valour of Margaret of Anjou, the sagacity of Isabel the Catholic, the administrative ability of Elizabeth, the diplomatic skill of Catharine II., and recollects herself in time to impress on her hearers that one

"who is qualified to be a happy wife and a good mother, need never look with envy upon the woman of genius, whose mental powers, by fitting her for stormy arena of politics, may have unfitted her for the quiet walks of domestic life."

As might have been expected, Lola spoke somewhat disdainfully of women who preferred

to vote rather than to cajole the men who voted. The lecturer forgot, perhaps, that all her sisters were not as well equipped as she for the business of fascination, and that to some of them the personal exercise of the franchise might seem less unwomanly aud objectionable than the arts of blandishment and intimidation.

Lola was bold enough to tell her American audience that the palm of beauty must be awarded to Englishwomen, and that the Yankees were too mercantile and practical to entertain the old spirit of gallantry. She mollified her hearers by adding that, after all, in America, "love dived the deepest and came out dryest"— a dark saying, from which she derived the conclusion that love in the United States was as brave, honest, and sincere a passion as elsewhere. The lecture on Romanism will not be regarded as a very formidable instrument of attack upon the Catholic Church. It concludes: "America does not yet recognise how much she owes to the Protestant principle. It has given the world the four greatest facts of modern times — steam-boats, railroads, telegraphs, and the American Republic!"

We can imagine with what enthusiasm this sentiment was received in Hope Chapel, where

the lecture was delivered in October 1858, in aid of a fund for a church which should be open free to the poor and unfortunate (as, by the way, all Roman Catholic churches are). By this time Lola appears to have been weaned of her spiritualistic heresies, and had become interested in Methodism. In her new zeal for her own soul's welfare she did not, however, forget the corporal needs of her fellows, and with native generosity, stimulated by religious considerations, she showered the money earned at her lectures upon the poor and afflicted. To replenish her store, and encouraged by the success of her new enterprize in New York, she resolved to try her luck once more on the other side of the Atlantic.

XXXII

A LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND

XXXII

A LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND

Lola landed from the American steam-ship, *Pacific*, at Galway on 23rd November 1858. She had not set foot in her native land since she left it, the bride of Thomas James, more than twenty years before. In Dublin she had last appeared as a *débutante* at the viceregal court; now, on 10th December, she appeared, there on the boards of the Round Room, as a public curiosity, as a woman whose fame not one among her auditors would have envied. But they flocked to see her in hundreds, and the opening promised a highly profitable tour. In her regenerate frame of mind the lecturer was distressed by the publication in the *Freeman* of a long article referring to her connection with Dujarier and the King of Bavaria. Being the daughter of an Anglo-Indian officer, Lola had inherited a tendency to write to the papers on every possible occasion, and she at once sent a letter to the journal, defending her character.

Her relations with Dujarier and Louis were, she insisted, absolutely proper and regular: to the former she was engaged; of the latter she was merely the friend and the adviser. The aspersions of her fair fame she attributed to the intrigues of Austria. She was in Ireland, and it was as well not to refer to the Jesuits.

At the new year she crossed over to England, beginning her tour at Manchester. We hear of her at Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leamington, Worcester, Bristol, and Bath. She drew crowded houses, though everywhere she went she had to contend with a strong counter-attraction in the person of Phineas T. Barnum, the celebrated showman, who was also touring England. Of course, she disappointed expectation. The public wanted to see the dashing, dazzling dare-devil of other days, not a rather sad woman, slightly tinged with Yankee religiosity. She arrived at last in London, where she lectured at St James's Hall. Two or three of the writer's friends faintly recollect having seen her on this occasion. For the impression she produced on her audience, I prefer, however, to rely on the notice in the *Era*, under date 10th April 1859.

A Last Visit to England

"Following closely upon the heels of Mr Barnum, Madame Lola Montez, parenthetically putting forth her more aristocratic title of Countess of Landsfeld, commenced on Thursday evening [7th April 1859] the first of a series of lectures at the St James's Hall. Revisiting this country, she has first felt her footing as a lecturer in the provinces, and now venturing upon the ordeal of a London audience, she has boldly added her name to the list of those who have sought, single-handed, to engage their attention. If any amongst the full and fashionable auditory that attended her first appearance fancied, with a lively recollection of certain scandalous chronicles, that they were about to behold a formidable-looking woman of Amazonian audacity, and palpably strong-wristed, as well as strong-minded, their disappointment must have been grievous; greater if they anticipated the legendary bull-dog at her side and the traditionary pistols in her girdle and the horse-whip in her hand. The Lola Montez who made a graceful and impressive obeisance to those who gave her on Thursday night so cordial and encouraging a reception, appeared simply as a good-looking lady in the bloom of womanhood, attired in a plain black dress, with easy, unrestrained manners, and speaking earnestly and distinctly, with the slightest touch of a foreign accent that might belong to any language from Irish to Bavarian. The subject selected by the fair lecturer was the distinction between the English and the

American character, which she proceeded to demonstrate by a discourse that must be pronounced decidedly didactic rather than diverting. With most of the characteristics mentioned as illustrative of each country, we presume the majority of her hearers had, in the course of their reading or experience, become already acquainted. That America looked to the future for her greatness, England to the past; that Americans believed in the spittoon as a valuable institution, and speed as the great condition of success in all things—it hardly needed a Lola Montez to come from the West to inform us. The excitable temperament of our transatlantic brethren, their readiness to raise idols and to demolish them, the great liberty of opinion that there prevails, and the little toleration of its expression, were the leading points of a lecture lasting an hour and a quarter, blended with a compliment to the American ladies, a tributary acknowledgment of the virtues of our own, and a digression into American politics as connected with everything. There was no attempt to weave into the subject a few threads of personal interest, no mention of any incident that had happened to her, and no anecdote that might have enlivened the dissertation in any way. The lecture might have been a newspaper article, the first chapter of a book of travels, or the speech of a long-winded American ambassador at a Mansion House dinner. All was exceedingly decorous and diplomatic, slightly gilded here and there with those commonplace laudations

that stir a British public into the utterance of patriotic plaudits. A more inoffensive entertainment could hardly be imagined; and when the six sections into which the lady had divided her discourse were exhausted, and her final bow elicited a renewal of the applause that had accompanied her entrance, the impression on the departing visitors must have been that of having spent an hour in company with a well-informed lady who had gone to America, had seen much to admire there, and, coming back, had had over the tea-table the talk of the evening to herself. Whatever the future disquisitions of the Countess of Landsfeld may be, there is little doubt that many will go to hear them for the sake of the peculiar celebrity of the lecturer."

XXXIII

THE MAGDALEN

XXXIII

THE MAGDALEN

That celebrity was very far from corresponding to the present dispositions and aspirations of the ex-adventuress. While travelling from town to town the transmutation of her emotions into religious fervour had gone on unchecked. The love she had once borne to men found an object in the unseen God; the wondering disgust excited by the memory of her relations with men she had learned to dislike became translated into repentance for sin; latent ambition now leaped up at the thought of a crown to be won beyond the tomb. Christianity offers us new worlds for old, promises new joys to those who have lost all zest for the old, proposes an objective which may be pursued to the brink of the grave, and assures every human being of the tremendous importance of his own destiny. For these reasons religion has always appealed with especial force to women in Lola's situation,

who, moreover, being usually deficient in the logical and critical faculties, are the less able to resist its appeal to their emotions.

During her stay in England Lola kept a spiritual diary, some fragments of which have been preserved to us. It is certainly illustrative of the depth and earnestness of her religious convictions, and it would be a cold-blooded act to analyse and to dissect the state of mind it portrays. The sentiments are often morbid in the extreme, as might be expected from one whose ideas of religion were derived from teachers of the extreme evangelical school. She writes:—

"Oh, I dare not think of the past! What have I not been? I lived only for my own passions; and what is there of good even in the best natural human being? What would I not give to have my terrible and fearful experience given as an awful warning to such natures as my own! And yet when people generally, even my mother, turned their backs upon me and knew me not, Jesus knocked at my heart's door. What has the world ever given to me? (And I have known *all* that the world has to give — *all!*) Nothing but shadows, leaving a wound on the heart hard to heal — a dark discontent.

"Now I can more calmly look back on the

stormy passages of my life—an eventful life indeed—and see onward and upward a haven of rest to the soul. I used once to think that heaven was a place somewhere beyond the clouds, and that those who got there were as if they had not been themselves on the earth. But life has been given to me to know that heaven begins in the human soul, through the grace of God and His holy word. Those who cannot feel somewhat of heaven here will never find it hereafter."

On another page we find :—

"To-morrow (the Lord's day) is the day of peace and happiness. Once it seemed to me anything but a happy day, but now all is wonderfully changed in my heart. . . . What I loved before now I hate. Oh! that in this coming week, I may, through Thee, overcome all sinful thoughts, and love every one.

"Thankful I am that I have been permitted to pray this day. Three years ago I cried aloud in agony to be taken; and yet the great, All-Wise Creator has spared me, in His mercy, to repent. All that has passed in New York has not been mere illusion. I feel it is true. The Lord heard my feeble cry to Him, and I felt what no human tongue can describe. The world cast me out, and He, the pure, the loving, took me in.

"To-morrow is Sunday, and I shall go to the poor little humble chapel, and there will I mingle my prayers with the fervent pastor,

and with the good and true. There is no pomp or ceremony among these. All is simple. No fine dresses, no worldly display, but the honest Methodist breathes forth a sincere prayer, and I feel much unity of soul. What would I give to have daily fellowship with these good people! to teach in the school, to visit the old, the sick, the poor. But that will be in the Lord's good time, when self is burned out of me completely."

The following entry is dated Saturday, in London :—

"Since last week my existence is entirely changed. When last I wrote I was calm and peaceful — away from the world. Now, I must again go forth. It was cruel, indeed, of Mr E. to have said what he did; but I am afraid I was too hasty also. Ought I to have resented what was said? No, I ought to have said not a word. The world would applaud me; but, oh! my heart tells me that for His sake I ought to bear the vilest reproaches, even unmerited.

"Good-bye, all the calm hours of reflection and repose I enjoyed at Derby! My calm days at the cottage are gone—gone. But I will not look back. Onward! must be the cry of my heart.

"Lord, have mercy on the weary wanderer, and grant me all I beseech of Thee! Oh, give me a meek and lowly heart!"

It seems from this final extract that some

painful circumstance compelled the writer against her will to go on her travels again. The diary affords proof that she was in England as late as September 1859; and the following year, she was again at New York.

XXXIV

LAST SCENE OF ALL

XXXIV

LAST SCENE OF ALL

Lola the saint was no more provident than Lola the sinner. She dissipated the large sums she had amassed in her English tour in the space of a few months, and with a mind tormented by remorse and religious scruples, could turn her thoughts to no system of livelihood. Threatened with poverty, and in a state of deep dejection, she was one day met in the streets of New York by a lady and gentleman who stopped and considered her attentively. Finally, evidently at the man's suggestion, his wife stepped up to Lola, and recalled herself to her recollection as an old school-fellow and playmate of her Montrose days. She was now the wife of Mr Buchanan, a florist of some standing. Lola was deeply affected by this meeting. This voice from her childhood supplied the human note in her present state of spiritual desolation and exaltation. The friendship begun thirty

years before in far-off Scotland was renewed. To the penitent Lola Mrs Buchanan's recognition of her seemed an act of amazing kindness and condescension. But the florist and his wife were not only religious but good people. They made provision for the ex-adventuress, perhaps by a judicious investment of the little money that remained to her; and Mrs Buchanan, sympathising warmly with her old friend's spiritual regeneration, was able to calm her doubts and scruples, and to divert her piety into practical channels.

The wayward, troubled soul of Lola Montez at last tasted peace—thanks, perhaps, as much to the consolations of true friendship as to those of religion. She abandoned the Methodist connection, and embraced the possibly less gloomy tenets of the Episcopal Church of America. She passed much of her time in deep retirement, reading and studying the Bible. One who knew her at this time says that her bearing was calm, graceful, and modest; of her beauty there remained no trace except her deep, lustrous, Spanish eyes. A conviction that she was soon to die of consumption possessed her, and she spent the rest of the year 1860 in preparation for her end.

"So far as outward actions could show," says her spiritual adviser, Dr F. L. Hawks, "with her 'old things had passed away, and all things had become new.' With a heart full of sympathy for the poor outcasts of her own sex, she devoted the last few months of her life to visiting them at the Magdalen Asylum, near New York, warning them and instructing them with a spirit which yearned over them, that they, too, might be brought into the fold. She strove to impress upon them not only the awful guilt of breaking the divine law, but the inevitable earthly sorrow which those who persisted with thoughtless desperation in sinful courses were treasuring up for themselves. Her effort was thus to redeem the time as far as she could; and the result of her labours can only be known on that day when she will meet her erring sisters at the impartial tribunal of the Eternal Judge."

Lola's premonition was verified. In December 1860 she was suddenly struck down — not by consumption, but by partial paralysis. She was conveyed to the Asteria Sanatorium, where Mrs Buchanan took charge of her. She lingered in great pain, patiently borne, for several weeks, and it was seen that there was no hope of her recovery. Dr Hawks visited her frequently. To him, her chosen confidant at this final stage of her chequered life, and the most fitted to

sympathise with the ideas that then dominated her, may be left the description of her last hours.

"In the course of a long experience as a Christian minister, I do not think I ever saw deeper penitence and humility, more real contrition of soul and more of bitter self-reproach than in this poor woman. Anxious to probe her heart to the bottom, I questioned her in various forms; spoke as plainly as I could of the qualities of a genuine repentance; set forth the necessity of the operations of the Holy Spirit really to convert from sin to holiness, and presented Christ as all in all—the only Saviour. For myself I am quite satisfied that God the Holy Ghost had renewed her sinful soul into holiness.

"There was no confident boasting, however. I never saw a more humble penitent. When I prayed with her, nothing could exceed the fervour of her devotion; and never had I a more watchful and attentive hearer than when I read the Scriptures. She read the blessed volume for herself, also, when I was not present. It was always within reach of her hand; and, on my first visit, when I took up her Bible from the table, the fact struck me that it opened of its own accord to the touching story of Christ's forgiveness of the Magdalene in the house of Simon.

"If ever a repentant soul loathed past sin, I believe hers did.

"She was a woman of genius, highly accom-

plished, of more than usual attainments, and of great natural eloquence. I listened to her sometimes with admiration, as with the tears streaming from her eyes, her right hand uplifted, and her regularly expressive features (her keen blue eyes especially) speaking almost as plainly as her tongue, she would dwell upon Christ, and the almost incredible truth that He could show mercy to such a vile sinner as she felt herself to have been, until I would feel that she was the preacher and not I.

"When she was near her end, and could not speak, I asked her to let me know by a sign whether her soul was at peace, and she still felt that Christ would save her. She fixed her eyes on mine, and nodded her head affirmatively."

Thus, on 17th January 1861, in the odour of sanctity, died Lola Montez, Countess of Landsfeld, Baroness Rosenthal, Canoness of the Order of St Theresa, sometime ruler of the kingdom of Bavaria, in the forty-third year of her age. She, whose fame had filled three continents, was committed to the custody of Mother Earth in Greenwood Cemetery, two days later, with the rites and ceremonial of the Episcopal Church. Her grave was marked by a tablet, bearing the inscription: "Mrs Eliza Gilbert, born 1818, died 1861." The men who had risked crowns and fortune for her love

would have hardly recognised her in her last part or under her last homely description.

At the bar of God Lola Montez pleaded guilty. I, as her advocate in the court of Humanity, may enter another plea.

For half a century the world has taken this woman at her own last valuation, and dismissed her as a criminal and a sinner. The orthodox Christian reproaches her with unchastity, exaggerating, as is his wont, the gravity of this particular transgression of his code. He would have had her waste her glorious beauty, made to gladden the hearts of men, and refuse the *rôle* of woman which nature had assigned her —because, forsooth! a petty English tribunal would not set her free from a tie it should never have allowed her to contract. The law was made for man; the claims and instincts of womanhood must override the decrees of any Consistory Court. Lola Montez was pre-eminently and essentially a woman — specially fitted and charged, therefore, to bring the great happiness of love to men. This which was her glory the sexless moralist makes her reproach. For him the perfect woman is the most unhuman; he admires the woolless sheep and the scentless flower.

Hers was a capacity for immense passion, happiness, and power. She longed not only to charm men but to rule them. By the happiness she procured them, she enslaved them. She exploited their passions, it will be said; and since when have we ceased to exploit the weakness of woman? In the pursuit of power we use the instruments easiest to our hands, we attack our opponents' most vulnerable points. This Lola did; this did every strong man of whom history has any record. Her qualities of mind, as evinced in the administration of Bavaria, were of a high order, and in a man would have commanded success; but men were dazzled by her beauty, and cried out to be influenced by that alone. We esteem in our own sex the faculties by which we are helped, led, and ruled; in the other, we prate of chastity, and value only that which ministers to our vanity, comfort, and sensuality. Women must be human just in so far as may conform to our individual needs. When we prize intellectual worth in women as highly as physical beauty, it will be time to protest against the methods of Lola Montez.

She subdued men by their passions, but she ruled them well. She challenged history to

adduce a case where a woman had wielded so much power so wisely and so disinterestedly. She was no Pompadour or Du Barry to whom the scurrile De Mirecourt compared her. Guilty at moments, as we all are, of derelictions from her principles, she was throughout life a lover of liberty in thought, word, and deed. When Europe lay under the heel of Metternich and the Ultramontanes, she, almost single-handed, struck a blow for freedom. The wiles of the cleverest intriguers in Europe proved powerless against her bold policy. At scheming she was no adept, trusting, as the strong will ever trust, to her force and personality to defeat the manœuvres of her foes. Had Louis of Bavaria not bowed before the storm, she and his kingdom would have played a great part in European history. As it was, to her intervention Switzerland partly owes the freedom of her institutions from clerical control. The terms in which she speaks of that country and of the United States, though purposely exaggerated, display her profound sympathy with the principles of democracy. Setting aside the qualities of the woman, let us gratefully acknowledge that Lola Montez, on a small stage and for a brief period, proved herself an able and humane administratrix and a staunch

friend to liberty. In her we have another of the many instances of capacity for government as the concomitant of an intensely feminine temperament.

She was valiant as an antique worthy. She was never at an end of her resources, never unnerved by catastrophe. Disaster after disaster left unexhausted her marvellous powers of recuperation. She could adapt herself to all men and all circumstances. She was at home in the courts of emperors and kings, in the *salons* of the learned, in the backwoods of California, in the mining camps of Australia, in the conventicles of New York. To the life of a recluse in a primeval wilderness she adapted herself as readily as to a London drawing-room. She was eloquent in many tongues, witty and light-hearted, adding to the world's gaiety. She was kindly and compassionate, cherishing dogs, and all four-footed things, visiting the sick and the afflicted, saying a kind word for the despised coolies of India. Her money she showered with reckless generosity on all who stood in need. Her excellences were her own; her faults lie at the door of society.

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